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ABSTRACT

This book--based on Cooperative Research Project No. 1994 (see ED 010 163)--reports the results of a 5-year study which examined outstanding English programs in 158 primarily metropolitan high schools in 45 states, and identified aspects of these programs which might be emulated or improved. Questionnaires were analyzed on data processing machines, interviews were subjected to content analysis, and specialists in English observed classroom procedures. Shared characteristics of these schools were found to be (1) effective and intelligent administrators, (2) well-prepared English teachers who are professionally interested in both the subject and the students, (3) adequate instructional materials, (4) reasonable teaching conditions, (5) locally-prepared curriculum guides, (6) a disturbing lack of sequence and structure in programs, especially composition and language, (7) an emphasis on literature, providing for close reading of individual texts supported by supplementary individual reading, (8) inadequate attention to reading, speech, and examinations, and (9) lack of radical educational experimentation. Recommendations for improved English instruction are based on these findings. (This document previously announced as ED 023 667.) (JS)

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THE NATIONAL STUDY OF HIGH SCHOOL
ENGLISH PROGRAMS

HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH INSTRUCTION TODAY

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Preface

The National Study of High School English Programs was a project cosponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English and conducted for the most part by members of the faculties of English and education at the University of Illinois. The report is based on individual studies of English programs in 158 high schools of 45 different states. Although schools were selected largely for their reputation in English, many of their problems and practices are not unlike those in schools large and small throughout the nation.

During the four years required to collect and analyze the data, the work of the primary investigators was supported continuously by important contributions from two graduate assistants, Robert A. Lucas from the Department of English and Joseph W. Thomson from the College of Education. Their contributions to both the field observations and the final analysis of the data were incisive and essential. Major assistance in the preparation of the final manuscript came from Arthur Applebee.

Mrs. Bobby Lark Wilson, project secretary and administrative assistant, supervised not only arrangements for the field visits, but also the typing of the final manuscript. Mrs. Patricia Martin was invaluable in directing the machine processing of various data. Jonathan Corbin assisted with the preparation of the report, and Gregory White tabulated data.

An advisory committee, appointed by the National Council of Teachers of English, provided wise guidance during the early phases of the Study and assisted in the interpretation of the data. Members included John J. DeBoer, University of Illinois; Lloyd

Dull, Canton Public Schools, Ohio, representing the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development; Robert Foose, Westfield High School, New Jersey, representing the National Association of Secondary-School Principals; Lou L. LaBrant, Dillard University; Henry C. Meckel, San Jose State College; Floyd Rinker, Commission on English, College Entrance Examination Board; and Edwin H. Sauer, Chicago State College.

Many individuals were consulted about the project design, the selection of the schools, and the interpretation of data. Early in the Study, Dora V. Smith, Alfred H. Grommon, and Hilda Taba gave generously of their time and suggestions. Lee J. Cronbach provided needed assistance with sampling procedures. Robert W. Rogers, then Head of the Department of English, now Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, offered both encouragement and specific suggestions. Among others whose advice and interest sustained the investigators throughout the Study were Leo P. Ruth, Doris V. Gunderson, Francis A. J. Ianni, Michael F. Shugrue, John H. Fisher, Margaret Ryan, and Albert R. Kitzhaber. Sister M. Philippa Coogan, B.V.M., having herself completed a study of the teaching of English in selected diocesan schools, met with the staff members to compare observations. Perceptive reactions by Dora V. Smith, Albert R. Kitzhaber, and Henry C. Meckel were especially helpful in preparing the final manuscript, as was the copy editing of Enid M. Olson and Cynthia H. Smith.

Special appreciation is due the following seventeen members of the faculty of the University of Illinois and the headquarters staff of the National Council of Teachers of English without whose enthusiastic participation in field visits and observations the Study would have been impossible: William Curtin, John Erickson, William H. Evans, Robert F. Hogan, J. N. Hook, James McCrimmon, Stanton Millet, Frank Moake, Priscilla Tyler, Jerry L. Walker, Harris W. Wilson, Robert J. Lacampagne, James Lyon, Roger E. Martin, Enid M. Olson, Robert W. Rogers, and Robert S. Whitman.

Above all we are indebted to the department chairmen, English faculties, and principals of the 158 cooperating high schools, whose cooperation and interest made the work of the researchers infinitely varied and personally rewarding.

The research reported herein was supported by the Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. This is a revision of C.R.P. No. 1994.

J.R.S.
R.K.A.

Foreword

When there is a discussion of the program in the lower school or elementary grades, most teachers of English in colleges and secondary schools show little interest and even less understanding. This lack of concern for the student's early schooling is, we believe, somewhat out of fashion. Now the high school teacher and the professor of English frequently admit their parochial attitude, apologize for the neglect, and promise "to do something about it."

What needs to be done is made abundantly clear in this report. Every teacher of English must think about a program, both sequential and consequential, and not limit the scope of his work to one or two years in the life of his students. The teacher needs to give more time to finding out what his objectives are and what the means for their attainment. In some millennium, which Messrs. Squire and Applebee do not find near at hand, our profession will surely have programs extending from preschool years to college graduation. Meanwhile, there is much that can be done to improve current purposes and practices by attacking the problem in various combinations of a student's school years. Grades 4–8, 6–10, 8–11, and 10–14 are areas in which to challenge the medieval pattern of verticality in the 8-4-(2) 4 or 6-3-3-(2) 4 organization. To get teachers at different levels working together is imperative. The teacher of any single year should know what his students learned in the preceding year and have a clear idea of what he is building on and toward.

In this informative document current practices in the English departments of outstanding schools are made known. But there is little reason for rejoicing. Even those departments that boast lay readers, large group instruction, team teaching, secretarial assistance, and released time for classroom teachers are usually found to have their potential unrealized. Invariably the emphasis is on the reading and discussion of literature. The chief concern in the teaching of writing continues to be correctness rather than content, logic, organization, and style. The neglect of language study is common.

In educational research this book is one of the most effective studies done in recent years. It should be widely read and widely used. It deals with two questions pertinent to the business of teaching of English: What Success? What Promise? Perhaps the authors, or investigators, as they call themselves, are saying that all too much is expected of the English teacher and that the complexity of the subject demands specialization in one or two of its parts.

Floyd Rinker
Executive Director
Commission on English
College Entrance Examination Board

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CHAPTER 1

The Nature of the National Study

The year 1961 found professional leaders in English vigorously engaged in a reappraisal of the assumptions and objectives of high school English teaching. Epitomized by the publication of *The National Interest and the Teaching of English,*[1] the movement reflected the belief that only frank, public assessment of the current state of English programs, coupled with bold, decisive action, would stimulate widespread curriculum reform. The efforts of the Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board and the careful discussion of the statement on "The Basic Issues in the Teaching of English," [2] published by four national societies, only accelerated the trend. With the development of a plan for curriculum study centers in English and with expanded support for research in teaching, action was taken by the United States Office of Education which seemed likely to promote gradual change and improvement. Still, professional leaders asked whether more could not be done immediately. Was it not possible to ascertain the ways in which strong schools are already achieving important results in English? What are the characteristics of English programs which *are* achieving results? The present study is an attempt to answer such questions. By identifying and studying secondary English programs which were reported as outstanding, the investigators sought to identify characteristics of superior programs which might be emulated in other schools.

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[1] Committee on National Interest, *The National Interest and the Teaching of English* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1961).

[2] *The Basic Issues in the Teaching of English,* Supplement to *College English,* XXI:1 (October 1959).

The selection of superior high school English departments posed immediate difficulties. No earlier research provided definite answers. However, some criteria were suggested in a questionnaire study by J. N. Hook of the characteristics of high schools which produced students cited in the Achievement Awards program of the National Council of Teachers of English.[3] The NCTE program is a national attempt to identify the superior high school graduates in English, involving at the time of this study some 6,000 or 7,000 high schools. The winners are determined by statewide committees which study specimens of each nominee's writing and his scores on two standardized tests—one, a college level test of grammar, usage, and composition skills; the other, a test of ability to read and interpret literature. In addition, letters of recommendation are required from teachers and school administrators. The maximum number of winners in each state is the number of that state's Representatives in Congress. Hook's questionnaire survey clearly suggested that the English programs in the schools producing winners and runners-up in this annual program differed in certain respects from conventional English programs. Assuming that superior English departments are those that consistently produce some students who are superior in English, the investigators determined to examine in depth the programs of those schools which year after year graduate students receiving Achievement Awards citations.

But basing a national study of this kind solely on results of the NCTE Achievement Awards program seemed unduly restrictive. Consequently, once the schools consistently recognized by this program had been identified, the project staff attempted to match them with an equal number of schools whose English programs were highly regarded. In securing the names of these latter schools, advice was sought from professors of English and education in state universities, including directors of freshman composition and supervisors of student teachers who visit schools; from the officers of regional and local English organizations affiliated with NCTE; and from consultants in state departments of education. What resulted was a group of 116 high schools which seemed representative of programs with reputations for achieving outstanding results in English.

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[3] J. N. Hook, "Characteristics of Award-Winning High Schools," *English Journal*, L:1 (January 1961), pp. 9–15.

To these 116 schools were added, during the second and third year of the study, 42 additional schools—19 schools engaged in experimental English programs, 7 Catholic schools, 9 independent schools, and 7 comprehensive high schools in large cities. In selecting schools in these special categories, the project staff solicited recommendations from the advisory committee and from specialists in curriculum development, Catholic education, and English in independent schools. The superintendents of six large-city school systems were also informed of the Study and asked to select one of their schools for investigation by the project staff. The names of the resulting 158 schools which cooperated in the National Study are presented in Appendix A.

Through classroom observation, individual interviews, group meetings with teachers and students, and the use of specially designed questionnaires and check lists, the investigators developed a comprehensive approach to assess and report on the English programs in the cooperating schools. Because of its purposes and methods of selection, as well as its cosponsorship by NCTE, the project was called the National Study of High School English Programs; that term and the abbreviation "the Study" or "the project" are used interchangeably in this report.

The Anticipated Findings

To guide staff members in planning instruments as well as to provide a focus for the final report, the investigators advanced twelve hypotheses which they believed to be characteristics of strong secondary English programs. These hypotheses were based on a considered evaluation of the characteristics of award-winning schools discussed by Hook;[4] a check list of characteristics of junior and senior high school English programs developed by the NCTE Commission on the English Curriculum;[5] and reports and recommendations from other committees, commissions, and publications of NCTE, the Commission on English, and other groups. Although the following statement of these guiding hypotheses includes an indication of some of the specific ways in which the project staff attempted to validate the assertions made, the investigators, in considering any particular aspect of the school programs, were guided by the combined findings of all interviews, observations, and questionnaires, rather than by any single measure or prediction. Chapter 13 reexamines the hypotheses in the light of Study findings.

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[4] Hook, *op. cit.*

GUIDING HYPOTHESES

In schools considered to have strong departments of English, we would expect superiority in the following characteristics:

1. English teachers will be well prepared in English, will be active in professional organizations, and will make use of opportunities for continuing their education through inservice training, sabbatical leave programs, or extension school services. (To be measured by responses to items on questionnaires; by interviews with principals, department chairmen, and selected teachers; and by the number of recipients of fellowships and awards.)

2. Literature programs will not be confined to a single anthology, but there will be such evidence of wide reading of many kinds of good books as library withdrawals, ample classroom libraries, and guided individual reading programs. Books will be not only prevalent but accessible. (To be measured by direct observation of facilities and classroom procedures; check lists on questionnaires for librarians and teachers; reading questionnaires; interviews with librarians and students; evidence of interaction between English department and library.)

3. There will be a perceptibly good "intellectual climate" in all aspects of the schools. More emphasis will be placed on ideas and processes of thought than on rote learning. (To be measured

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[5] Commission on the English Curriculum, "A Check List for Evaluating the English Program in the Junior and Senior High School," *English Journal*, LI:4 (April 1962), pp. 273–282.

by classroom observation, student interviews and questionnaires, evidence of interrelationships between departments, evidence of successful student-led activities related to subject areas, sampling of assignments.)

4. Teachers will provide not only for frequent and varied writing experiences, but for meaningful motivation, for careful correction of writing and thinking, and for supervised revision of papers. (To be measured by classroom observation, interviews with teachers, departmental interview, evidence available in courses of study, and direct review of students' writing.)

5. Schools will reveal variety in methods and materials of instruction for different groups of students. Teachers will have considerable latitude in choosing materials of instruction. There will be evidence of experimentation and innovation in the *kinds of instruction*. (To be assessed by studying methods and purposes of grouping of classes, elective programs, use of large-small group instruction and other approaches indicated in the course of study, departmental interviews, student interviews, and classroom observation.)

6. Language, literature, and composition will be taught in *appropriate proportion and not as separate entities*. Instruction will be coordinated and sequential. (To be measured by evaluation of courses of study, classroom observation, concept check list, questionnaires.)

7. Schools will provide comprehensive instruction in the skills of reading for all pupils and, in addition, special instruction for pupils whose needs and abilities warrant more individualized procedures. (To be measured by classroom observation, courses of study, departmental interviews, issues questionnaire, departmental meetings.)

8. There will be in general a favorable climate for teaching as evidenced by appropriate salaries; good pupil-teacher ratios; efficient, pleasant facilities and school plant; and comparative freedom from burdensome clerical or policing obligations. Teachers will reflect positive attitudes toward teaching at all levels, and administrators will respect the professional integrity of their teachers. Though teachers will vary in their methods and approaches to teaching, there will be interaction and a considerable degree of unanimity in their efforts to deal with common problems. (To be

measured through questionnaires and interviews with principal, department head, selected teachers; observation in classes; meetings with students; departmental meetings.)

9. There will be a reasonable and a professional approach to the supervision of teachers. Subject-oriented supervisors will work constructively with beginning teachers and help coordinate the entire program. Supervisors will be given considerable scope and responsibility in the hiring of new teachers and in writing the English program. Appropriate time for such supervision will be given to the department heads. English teachers will be organized in a department led by a capable and resourceful department chairman. (To be measured by department head interview and questionnaire, principal interview, interview with teachers.)

10. Within the English department there will be some unique, dedicated teachers who enthusiastically motivate student achievement. (To be measured by student interviews, individual teacher questionnaire, classroom observation, principal interview.)

11. Schools which have strong English programs for college bound students will also make special accommodations for the interests and abilities of terminal students. They will therefore have fewer dropouts. (To be measured by interviews, observation, discussions with counselors and administrators, interviews with advanced and terminal students, reading questionnaire.)

12. The philosophy and substance of the English program will reflect changing social and educational patterns of our times. The impact of technological innovations as they affect our society will be apparent in the content and methods of teaching English. The English curriculum will be subject to constant reevaluation in the light of our changing society. (To be measured by interviews with chairman and principal, classroom observation, study of curriculum, departmental interview.)

The Selection of the Sample

The quality of the product produced by public schools, according to several established studies, varies with school size, geographic location, socioeconomic level of the drawing population, per pupil expenditure (which varies to some extent with salary-schedules), and the population density of the drawing area.[6] Given that these factors do influence the quality of students produced by a school, little is to be gained by another survey of the gross effects of these variables. The investigators therefore decided to hold these factors relatively constant so that differences in the quality of the educational programs could more reasonably be attributed to internal differences.

The most desirable means of providing this focus is through construction of a sample to control the variables. Accordingly, the investigators matched as closely as possible the schools which consistently produced NCTE Achievement Awards winners with schools of similar reputation which had not produced winners. Since the factors of geographic representation and percent of students going on to college determine the degree to which the study may be considered comprehensive, the investigators also attempted to equate these across the two groups. In effect, then, the two groups were approximately equated on (1) size of graduating class, (2) per pupil expenditure, (3) geographic region, (4) teachers' minimum salaries, (5) rural-urban balance, (6) percent of students going on to college, and (7) occupational profile of the drawing area.

Sampling Procedure

The proposal submitted to the United States Office of Education called for a survey of practices in schools consistently producing NCTE Achievement Awards winners. At the suggestion of that office, this initial proposal was expanded to include a comparison of these practices with those in schools of good reputation not producing award winners. Operationally, this produced two populations of schools, those schools producing award winners in at least four of the five years between and including 1958 and 1962 and the complement of population—those highly regarded in their regions not producing award winners in at least four years during the specified five-year period.

It should be noted at the outset that this criterion does not imply the superiority or inferiority of any given school in either population. A brief glance at the history and nature of the awards as well as the contest policies of schools should make this apparent. First, the NCTE Awards are a relatively recent innovation, administered at the state level. Only during the last few years have many schools begun to enter the contest on a consistent basis. The total number of schools entering the contest has grown from roughly 4,000 applying schools in its second year to approximately 7,000 in 1963. Second, some schools refrain from entering such events as a matter of policy. Thus it is apparent that the second population will have at least some who could have been members of the first as measured by another index of student achievement in English.

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[6] John C. Flanagan *et al., Studies of the American High School,* Monograph No. 2, Cooperative Research Division Project 226, U.S. Office of Education (December 1962).

Initially, 89 schools which had each produced at least one Achievement Awards winner in four out of the preceding five years were identified from files maintained by the National Council of Teachers of English. A general letter containing the names of these schools was then sent to supervisory personnel, directors of college composition programs, officers of state English associations, and others familiar with high school English programs in each of the states represented on the list. These people were asked to identify schools in their states which were similar to the ones listed and which also possessed good reputations in English. A general questionnaire on school characteristics was used to select the pairs most closely matched on the seven demographic variables listed above. Eventually this resulted in a population of 110 paired schools[7] with correlations running about 0.65. The least successful match in this sample was size of graduating class, at 0.616; the best was geographic region where no approximation was allowed.

After two schools withdrew, the basic sample of the Study thus became 106 schools in matched pairs plus the two schools whose pairings had dropped. Eight additional schools were used in pilot studies to perfect instruments and approaches, making

[7] The reader should not be confused by apparent inconsistencies regarding the number of schools in the sample. During much of the discussion which follows in this report, *n* will usually be different from the original 116 schools or the 158 total since usable data in every category were not always available from each of the cooperating schools.

a total of 116 schools involved in the initial phases of the Study. The total rose to 158 when the project was later extended to include Catholic, independent, and metropolitan high schools, as well as schools with experimental programs in English.

As the Study progressed, a special problem developed concerning the comparative data on the 53 pairs of schools. All data collected in every phase of the project indicated that the two populations were more similar than they were like other schools nationally, and even a careful reading of the reports from project observers, who were not told of the differences in the two groups, failed to reveal any characteristics unique to one or the other population. In short, findings did not justify the paired analysis. Apparently, outside specialists identified schools so similar in measurable characteristics to the schools with Achievement Awards winners that the two could not be separated.

The question may be raised whether, if differences do not exist between the groups, such differences exist between the schools in the Study as a whole and those nationally. Here, however, data which will be presented subsequently indicate that the differences are indeed considerable and that the selection of the 158 programs in the National Study as characteristic of the better programs nationally was justified.

To simplify the presentation of findings, the comparative analysis of the two populations has been eliminated from the discussion which follows. Data will be presented only for the entire group of 116 schools, but the reader should know that the investigators have in every case examined possible differences between the subgroups identified earlier and have found in every case no significant variations. Discussion of the characteristics of the schools along the dimensions on which they were matched will serve to describe the basic sample of the National Study.

Geographic Distribution

Although this survey was made on a selective group of schools rather than a random sample, some consideration had to be given to geographic distribution if the diverse curricular objectives characteristic of different areas of the country were to be adequately represented. As can be seen from Table 1, with the exception of the Southeast and the Great Lakes regions, the concentration of high schools in this survey varies from that in the nation by an average of only 3 percent. The considerable difference in representation of the Southeast results primarily from the lack of very small schools in the Study. According to the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (1961), roughly 34 percent of the total number of southeastern high schools have enrollments under 200, but none of these schools were selected for study. The large difference in the Great Lakes is due primarily to the economics of research: since the National Study offices were in Illinois, it was less expensive to visit midwestern schools; hence, pilot visits were made in this area. The reader should be cautioned at this point that, although this particular distribution does happen to correspond roughly to the distribution of schools in the nation, not all findings of the study are applicable to all schools in the nation. As will be seen, this Study sampled primarily urban and suburban schools of fairly large enrollments. Representation of very small, rural, and small town schools is quite sparse and concentrated in a few geographic regions.

Table 1

Geographic Distribution of Schools
Proportion of Schools in Geographic Regions

	Northeast	*Middle East*	*Southeast*	*Great Lakes*	*Plains*	*Southwest*	*Rocky Mountains*	*Far West*	*Total*
Nation[8]	0.039	0.101	0.295	0.124	0.178	0.118	0.038	0.057	1.000
Study	0.075	0.132	0.170	0.245	0.132	0.094	0.057	0.094	0.999

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[8] Edmond A. Ford and Virgil R. Walker, *Public Secondary School Statistics of Education in the United States*, 1958–1959 Series (Washington, D.C., Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1961), p. 29. Figures converted to proportion of total number of schools.

Characteristics of the Schools

Socioeconomic dimensions of the schools in the Study were difficult to assess because of the number of categories involved in each variable. When schools were analyzed in terms of secondary and primary drawing areas, however, a few important characteristics emerged. Most important, perhaps, was the clear indication of a heavy emphasis in the original sample of 116 schools on urban and suburban residential areas. Only two schools in the Study drew primarily from small towns or rural farm areas, although 6.6 percent reported these as their secondary drawing area. Some 25 percent of the schools reported only one type of drawing area, indicating that they would have unusually homogeneous student populations.

Table 2 presents a brief summary of the other characteristics which were considered in forming the original matched pairs. The variety along all dimensions suggests that a school's reputation for a successful English program is not largely dependent on any factors extrinsic to the program, although such programs seem more likely to exist where the school can draw on

Table 2

Characteristics of Study Schools

	N	*X*	*S.D.*
Size of Graduating Class	106	439.68	159.681
Percentage of College Bound Graduates	104	54.00%	18.302%
Expenditure per Pupil	92	$509.69	$212.251
Minimum Salaries Paid to Teachers	104	$4598.69	$465.34
Percentage of Students Whose Parents' Occupational Classification Is Reported as:			
Professional, managerial, or highly skilled	102	55.634%	18.298%
Semiskilled or unskilled	102	42.567%	19.773%
Rural or agricultural	102	3.779%	6.777%

the resources of comparatively affluent urban and suburban communities.

Creation of Instruments

After schools had been selected, the project staff turned its attention to the creation of questionnaires, interview schedules, observation guides, and overall directions to guide the study of English programs. Available reports and instruments were carefully considered, among them the criteria of the National Study of Secondary School Evaluation,[9] the earlier school studies of Dora V. Smith,[10] and the summary of research on classroom observation reported in the *Handbook of Research on Teaching*.[11]

Preliminary forms of each instrument were used in visits to eight schools during the spring of 1963; they were then revised in light of the findings of the pilot study and recommendations of the national advisory committee. The twenty-six separate instruments developed are briefly described in Appendix C of this report, together with an account of how they were administered; all are reprinted in Appendix B of the official report of this study to the United States Office of Education.[12]

In addition to data secured from these instruments, schools were asked during the course of the Study to furnish the following materials: (a) a school handbook or guide; (b) an organization chart (if any) indicating staff responsibilities and courses taught; (c) an English course of study (if any), including a statement of objectives; (d) a list of textbooks and literature books used in English; (e) samples of recent midsemester, semester, and year examinations; (f) representative examples of student writing and teacher corrections. These materials provided an important perspective in interpreting the programs observed.

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[9] National Study of Secondary School Evaluation, *Evaluative Criteria, 1960 Edition* (Washington, D.C., The Study, 1960).

[10] Dora V. Smith, *Evaluating Instruction in Secondary School English* (Chicago, National Council of Teachers of English, 1941).

[11] Donald M. Medley and Harold E. Mitzel, "Measuring Classroom Behavior by Systematic Observation," *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, N. L. Gage, ed. (Chicago, Rand McNally & Co., 1963).

[12] James R. Squire and Roger K. Applebee, *A Study of English Programs in Selected High Schools Which Consistently Educate Outstanding Students in English*, C.R.P. No. 1994 (Urbana, Ill., University of Illinois, 1966).

Selection and Preparation of Observers

The regular project staff consisted of the Director, the Associate Director, and two graduate assistants. Ten faculty members of the Department of English and the College of Education at the University of Illinois and one member of the national NCTE headquarters staff formed the basic team of observers for the Study. During the two-year period of school visitation, six other qualified observers from the University of Illinois and the NCTE staff also participated, serving when schedules could not be arranged to accommodate those initially involved. These observers brought a variety of specialized backgrounds and interests in English and its teaching to the National Study. Most had previously taught in public secondary schools, but two had not had experience either as teachers or as students in public schools; several were specialists in literature and its teaching; others were primarily concerned with rhetoric and composition; two had unique interests in the theory and process of language instruction. United in their desire to improve the teaching of English, they formed an impressive team which yielded insights of many kinds. These observers are listed in Appendix B.

During the two and a half years of the Study, observers visited the 158 schools 306 times in all. One hundred sixteen of these visits were for two days and involved two project observers, one of whom was regularly a member of the staff. Three-member teams visited sixteen other schools, primarily the very large schools which did not easily admit to study by a smaller group. Twenty-five schools were visited by only one observer. Although initial plans had called for more selective visitation, careful scheduling made possible the direct assessment of all of the schools except one which withdrew during the third year. Although the instruments developed for the National Study yielded voluminous statistics, the independent judgments and insights of qualified project observers remain the heart of this report.

Treatment of Data

The data accumulated from the original 116 schools of the project were analyzed separately from the data on the 42 schools added later. The bulk of this report, therefore, deals with impressions based on close study of these 116 schools, with interesting contrasts from Catholic and independent schools introduced where relevant. Because of the special problems and importance associated with experimental programs in English and with comprehensive schools in metropolitan centers, these matters are dealt with in separate chapters.

Questionnaires from 1,331 teachers and 13,291 students were analyzed on data processing machines. Other statistical data were summarized for each school and tabulated by hand. The interviews with individual teachers and with class and departmental groups became more meaningful when a content analysis indicated concerns which many teachers shared. The summary reactions of observers also yielded to such analysis and revealed some of the arresting impressions reported in Chapter 2. Except for this general analysis and the various statistical summaries of classroom observation, the reports from observers are presented descriptively in appropriate sections of this report.

Any survey as comprehensive as the National Study must be somewhat selective in the data reported and discussed at any one time or risk obscuring their significance in a deluge of raw statistics. This report has therefore attempted to isolate some of the findings of the Study which will be of the most use and importance in American high schools. Specialists interested in a fuller report of findings may examine the official report of the Study to the United States Office of Education.[13]

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[13] Squire and Applebee, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER 2

Foundations of an English Program

Preceding a more detailed discussion of curriculum, department organization, and teaching conditions which were found in the 116 schools noted for the success of their programs in English is an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of these schools. These general characteristics emerge from the summary reports of project observers, the tabulation of observed classroom practices, and the analysis of the courses of study and other materials supplied to the project office. Together with pertinent comments of teachers and students in group and individual interviews, these reactions present a composite portrait of the 116 schools and also a summary of the major factors which may lead to the success or failure of any English program.

The School as a Whole

Quite clearly the English program in a given school is influenced by characteristics common to the academic and administrative program of the school as a whole, and according to project observers two broad factors more than anything else determine these characteristics: (1) the quality of instructional and administrative leadership demonstrated by the building principal; (2) the tradition of learning and education within the school and the community.

The quality of the school administrator again and again affected observers' assessments of a school, with some two thirds of the characteristics noted in their summaries directly attributable to his work or influence. Observers who lacked recent experience with secondary schools were impressed with the near absolute authority wielded by a principal in some school situations. Few college deans or presidents are able to operate with such autonomy, selecting and assigning staff, determining course content, making decisions about both building and instruction, sometimes without reference to higher administrative authorities and often without reference to many members of the faculty. Such autonomy does not suggest poor effects: in the majority of instances the building principals were cited for their vision, their concern with academic learning, and their ability to provide instructional leadership. In such cases, the decisions on instruction are made at the school level and are integrally related to the program.

Where authority was removed from the principal and assigned to a central office, however, as in most large multiple high school districts, observers were quick to note the stultifying effect on the overall tone of the school. What bothered observers was the removal from the school site of decisions about teachers and teaching, about textbooks, about curriculum—about the very matters which can be decided wisely only in relation to the individual class. So seriously do such practices affect English teaching that they are discussed again in greater detail in Chapters 4 and 11.

Among other considerations directly traceable to the leadership of the building principal is the general adequacy of the building plant, which ranked fourth among observer impressions of the schools. Newness or architectural beauty seemed less important than functional contribution to the instructional program. Observers asked themselves if classrooms were provided with adequate equipment; if shelving and study space enhanced the use of the library; if teachers had a departmental English center, student conference rooms, and adequate work space when not assigned classroom duties. Where such conditions existed, observers could feel the physical plant was a helpful adjunct to the instructional program.

The principal's interest and effectiveness are also reflected in the concern—or lack of it—which some faculties show for the educational, cultural, and social issues of our day. So lethargic and remote was the atmosphere in some schools that this tied for ninth among unfavorable impressions of observers. Nevertheless, other schools provided special lectures or round table discussions on foreign affairs, international exchange programs involving students and faculty, special musical and dramatic productions, a monthly series of major films—in other words, activities of all kinds designed to involve students and faculty in the world and culture of which they are a part. These were often the same schools which actively promoted professional discussion and participation in local and regional professional organizations. Innovation, eighth among characteristics noted by observers, is related to this general atmosphere; and, if observers did not always find that experimentation reflected sound educational approaches (see Chapter 12), most agreed that some such activity is essential to the health of any program.

The second major influence on the overall program was the tradition of learning and education in the school and community, an influence which proved surprisingly stronger than differences in social class and home background. To be sure, cosmopolitan, racially mixed student bodies representing several social classes did contrast sharply with those from relatively restricted, middle class suburban communities, but such differences did not always seem to directly affect the teaching of English. More important in many schools was the simple supposition that the program must be excellent: "Parents expect their students to learn here," reported one principal. "We have long had a tradition of academic learning," said another. In such schools, achievement-oriented students and staff seem to restrict their concern to major academic objectives, tolerating less willingly the seductions of social or pseudointellectual events.

This orientation is often strengthened by the tradition of an ethnic group in the community. Swedish families were credited with establishing a vigorous academic program in one city school system; immigrant Jewish parents were raising the tone of another school; the serious scholastic attitudes of Oriental students were cited in a third. Nearby military installations or governmental laboratories and research centers in outlying towns throughout the nation also contribute materially to the intellectual atmosphere of many schools, bringing students whose families may value knowledge, learning, and academic success far more highly than the community has in the past. More than any other factor, the presence of a substantial number of such "intruders" seems to be changing the tradition in many long established southern and western schools and, to the project staff, is one explanation for a number of out-of-the-way schools which emerged as particularly promising institutions. Surely the vigorous character of such schools contrasts sharply with the depressing static quality of some schools in which teachers, parents, and students reflect an excessively rigid, unchanging local social order.

But the decline of tradition was observed with sufficient frequency to deserve special discussion. High schools change as their communities change—a truism of American education, but one reflected in many ways by schools visited here. Especially in our cities do we find schools faced with populations and educational needs far different from those they have traditionally served. Popular reputation of "the" academic school in a community dies slowly; so does the program design in the college preparatory school. "This isn't the school that it once was," ruefully complained one teacher. Or, "this school is dying if it is not already dead." It is not surprising in a study devoted to describing the English programs in institutions known to be achieving excellent results in English that some of these results may be attributed more to yesterday's students than to today's. Faced with changing conditions and student bodies they do not always understand, teachers struggle to elicit the same standards of performance from their pupils as they had from those graduates for which their school has long been acclaimed. More often than not, project observers commended teachers for their struggle, sympathized with their inability to find educational solutions for problems created by changing neighborhoods, and reported that many programs may be better—at least for academically inclined students—as a result of such attempts to "live up" to the memories of the recent past. Where schools permit such traditions to interfere with their responsibilities to new kinds of students, the attempt is of course quite indefensible.

The tradition of experimentation also influences the character of school faculties, but not always in favorable ways. A number of schools visited in the Study had achieved enviable national distinction as a result of their innovations and contributions to American education, engendering in the faculties a desirable *esprit de corps* and attracting visitors from everywhere in the country. Unfortunately such publicity frequently seems to have an undesirable effect, creating among some faculties a parochial smugness, a satisfaction with things as they are, an attitude of superiority and lack of concern with the total profession. Said one observer's report:

> The overall educational program seemed to me perfectly mediocre, but the mediocrity was disguised by a false air of hustle, bustle, needless confusion, and unbelievable scheduling complexities. . . . Teachers and students alike are so thoroughly enamoured of the system, and so convinced they are of superior intellectual capacity, that everyone felt, as nearly as I could tell, that he must perform in an unusual way. . . . [There is] needless complexity of scheduling and administrative organization that has as its purpose imitation of the private preparatory school, and as its result, the substitution of constant motion for solid substance, pose for real achievement.

Most serious is the discovery that, in many such experiment-oriented schools, administrators develop a greater concern with the superficial trappings of programs—getting teams of teachers together, achieving flexibility in scheduling, substituting chimes or music for bells—than with the subject content and the pupils who are to be taught. These observations are discussed more fully in Chapter 12. Perhaps any high school sufficiently distinguished to attract national attention will be influenced by what

Theodore Sizer refers to as the "gee whiz" syndrome;[1] certainly administrators and teachers in such schools must remember these dangers and must seek to balance glowing public reports with candid self-appraisal.

The supplementary studies of Catholic schools revealed yet another instance of old and often highly respected traditions which were directly affecting the program in English. Especially in the Jesuit schools, project observers noted a traditional goal of the "eloquent man" pursued through a steeping in classical learning through firsthand knowledge of Latin and Greek. Although once effective, this method seemed to observers to have lost much of its relevance, and its goals seemed not to have adapted to the needs of a changing society. Another aspect of this tradition is a desire to attain absolute knowledge in an integrated system accounting for all phenomena. Those ideas which do not readily conform are either forced into the pattern or ignored as irrelevant. One result is an educational program which places little value upon discovery, unless that discovery leads to what is considered to be the preordained, already discovered truths. Some comments of observers reflected this spirit:

> One gets the impression that things haven't changed much at ________________ since its founding. The time-tested truths that made up the content of the curriculum in 1900 still remain, and the attitudes and beliefs which marked the reasoning religious gentleman of 1900 are still fostered. Only in science have recent developments forced change, but science is not emphasized at ________________. Moral and spiritual values constitute the matrix of the curriculum.
>
> This school has not yet eliminated the Victorian attitudes that had stifled an age.
>
> The department head sees the need for articulation, but he thinks that it should be articulated in terms of moral and spiritual values since he considers them the heart of the program.

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[1] Theodore Sizer, "Classroom Revolution: Reform or Panacea?" *Saturday Review*, XLVIII (June 10, 1965), p. 54.

> I had the feeling that any teacher in the school might freely substitute in every academic area without any disorientation because, after all, the objectives and methodology remain the same.

> The program is a good academic, conservative one. . . . However, the conservative nature of the program, the reliance on memory data passed down from the instructor to student seems unnecessarily oppressive considering the natural talent of the student body.

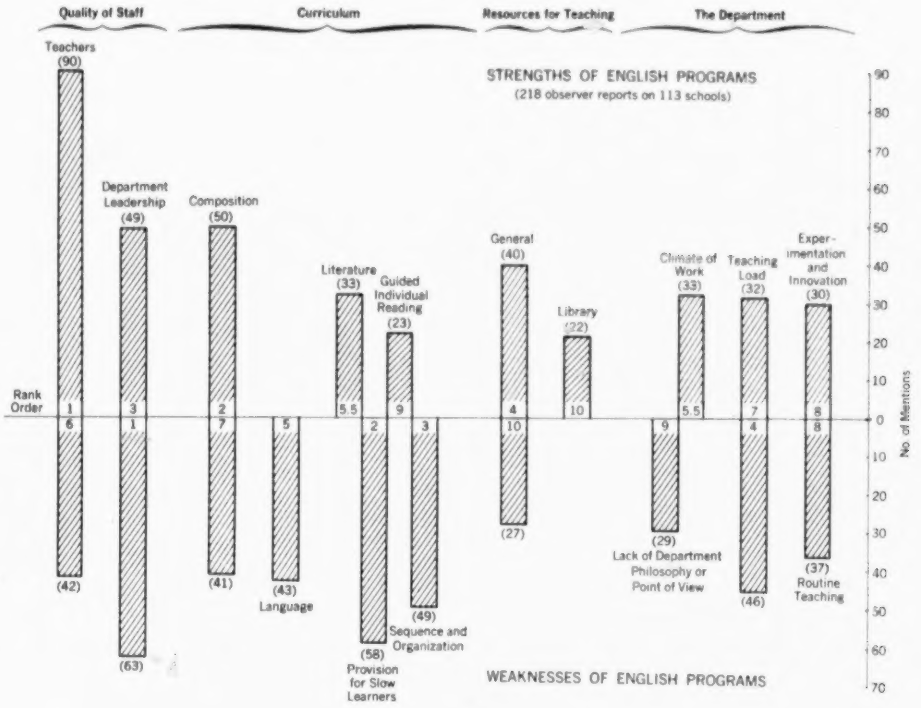
The result is a Catholic education which is no longer really catholic. The traditions of another age persist in the academic gowns which lay teachers wear, the uniforms for students, and the disciplined silence of the halls—the physical manifestations of the conformity to an ideal held valid and sufficient for every individual. While admitting it is sometimes valuable to provide adolescents with well-defined goals of learning, observers felt that these traditions were usually more frustrating than beneficial and that in most schools they were stifling curriculum development and educational advance.

The Observers Look at the English Program

At the same time that they were asked to record their general impressions of the school, observers were asked to summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the English program in particular. According to their assessments, summarized in Figure 1, the quality of the staff and of department leadership appear to have the most decisive effects upon the teaching of English. Related to these factors were the quality of the programs which the staff had developed and the conditions under which they taught.

Although the teachers in the Study schools had unusually fine preparation and a high degree of professional commitment, as is shown in detail in the next chapter, seldom did observers find uniformly excellent teachers in any department. Instead, the successful English programs seem to rely on a nucleus of outstanding English teachers who inspire the greater number of mediocre or nondescript members of the department. In those

Figure 1 Strengths and Weaknesses of English Programs



departments where the quality of the English staff was cited as a weakness, there tended to be large numbers of teachers of average quality and interest who might have been inspired to more successful efforts by a small cadre of gifted teachers. The implication for departmental staffing is clear: schools must utilize such incentives as merit pay to reward, and thus retain, these true "master teachers" and must provide maximum opportunity for interaction and professional discussion among members of the English department.

If master teachers are important, neither can the quality and leadership of department chairmen be underestimated. Ranked third among strengths and first in weaknesses by observers of these schools, the chairman—if well prepared and given adequate time and responsibility—can provide the vision and inspiration vital to a truly outstanding program. His responsibility for the effective operation of many aspects of the program identified as characteristic strengths or weaknesses in Figure 1 is apparent; the adequacy of resources, the climate of work, the degree of sequence and articulation, the statement of a departmental point of view, and the stimulation of innovative, creative teaching depend in large part on his initiative. Indeed, so crucial seemed the position of the department chairman that the project staff called two separate conferences to formulate recommendations dealing directly with this problem.[2]

In considering separate aspects of English, the most striking impression reported by observers is the absence of programs in language (grammar, usage, semantics, etc.) among reported strengths and their high rank among recurrent weaknesses. As Chapter 7, dealing with language instruction, makes clear, the Study found no national consensus whatsoever in the teaching of language, a situation which has led to chaos in most school programs. In composition and in literature, at least, observers found occasion to praise as well as to condemn.

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[2] James R. Squire, Roger K. Applebee, and Robert J. Lacampagne, *High School Departments of English: Their Organization, Administration, and Supervision* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1965).

College preparatory classes were so frequently outstanding that these programs emerge as a special strength of Study schools, but there was no such merit in programs for the slow student, the lower track. Confusion and diffidence, as well as a lack of time, energy, and funds, again and again proved characteristic of programs for these students. This may reflect the unique nature of the schools studied, schools selected because of their reportedly strong programs in English for college preparatory students, yet there is little evidence to suggest that stronger programs for the slow student are in operation elsewhere.

Also characteristic of outstanding English programs is an adequate supply of books and learning materials. A rich collection of textbooks in every classroom, a well-stocked, accessible library, supplementary books and learning resources, and classroom book collections add substantially to the effectiveness of any program; when these are inadequate or unavailable, the quality of instruction must suffer.

Teaching load, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 3, ranked seventh among strengths and fourth among weaknesses in Study schools. College professors among the observers alternated between pity and despair over what they found in some situations: average pupil-teacher ratios in excess of 150, five classes per teacher, committee assignments, lack of preparation periods; yet in one fourth of the schools a deliberate attempt had been made to conform to the general standards recommended by the National Council of Teachers of English and the Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board. Where efforts were being made to restrict loads to four classes totaling not more than 100 pupils, with time for paper grading, conferences, and preparation, morale seemed higher and instruction better. Although factors such as the quality of the staff, the leadership in the department, and the resources available were sometimes more obvious in their efforts, a substantial number of observers agreed that load remained a critical factor in the overall excellence of the programs.

The School Looks at Itself

Strengths and Weaknesses Identified by Teachers and Counselors

The analysis of observer reactions concerning the strengths and weaknesses of the English programs is supported in all respects but one by the comments of individual teachers. The one area of disagreement concerned academic freedom, a factor observers found lacking in all but a very few programs. In all, some 438 teachers were interviewed separately, usually those individuals identified by the principal or department chairman as being the "real strengths" of the staff. On some occasions, however, project observers chose to interview other teachers, some who expressed interesting and often deviant views in the department interviews, others whose time schedule made interviewing particularly convenient. During the interviews, these teachers were asked to identify the unique qualities and weaknesses of the English programs in which they were teaching, as well as to suggest desirable changes.

The most frequent strength, cited by almost one fourth of the interviewees, was the atmosphere surrounding the teaching situation at the school; more specifically, the *freedom*. Yet the teachers' responses indicated two curiously divergent views: in the one instance, a teacher would reply, "The freedom is great here . . . we meet often, which helps articulation"; and in the other, "Freedom is good. There's no snooping here." As indicated earlier, project observers sometimes saw the freedom from administrative interference implied in the latter statement as little more than anarchy: a lack of clearly defined scope and sequence in the program and an absence of cooperation among teachers.

Other strengths identified by teachers tended to correlate more clearly with the reports of observers, counselors, and students. The general quality of the English staff was mentioned as the second most important factor in contributing to the success of the English program. Programs in composition and literature were also cited; clearly these were more highly regarded than offerings in language, reading, and speech. The following comments are typical of teachers' general assessment:

> There is stability of the staff, and a solid core of master teachers.
>
> We have a healthy balance between the conservative and the progressive teacher.
>
> There is an extremely well-educated staff, and professional commitment.
>
> Conscientious teachers are alert to new methods. Young teachers lack experience, but they want to learn and are eager.
>
> We have some isolated instances of highly resourceful teaching. This is tied up with specific teacher personalities.
>
> We have excellent English teachers. You can have a good program but if you don't have the teachers . . . nothing happens.

It is evident from these comments that the teachers were enthusiastic about the program mainly because they felt that they were a part of it—that their ideas had been used fruitfully in the preparation of the goals. Only occasionally did the teachers complain that such articulation stifled their efforts to experiment, whereas those teachers who lauded freedom often lamented the lack of articulation or of specific goals.

Nor did working conditions go unnoted by the teachers, but they were mentioned far more frequently as a particular weakness than as a particular strength of the programs in these schools. Indeed, though project observers reported other more striking problems, teaching conditions ranked first among all weaknesses reported by the teachers. Their complaints were many and varied: thirty-seven teachers singled out the teacher-student ratio; others were dissatisfied with the arrangement of the school day, claiming a forty-minute class period was too short or a seventy-minute period was too long. Some complained of being unnecessarily burdened with assignments such as study halls, homerooms, and other extra duties. Concomitant with these major problems were nine complaints that the school day lacked either a conference period or a planning period (too often defined by many schools as one and the same). As an extreme example, one school had an average workload of 168 students in five to six classes each day, class periods as long as sixty-eight minutes, and study hall and activity assignments for every teacher. Fortunately, such schools were the exception in this Study.

Problems related to the overall program in English were the second area of weakness which teachers noted, especially problems of articulation or specifically defined objectives within the department. Paired answers such as the following again indicate that such weaknesses may be the logical result of the freedom which is so often praised:

STRENGTH: "Freedom under a loosely organized curriculum."

WEAKNESS: "Same as the strength—that is, each teacher is so free that teachers in subsequent grades can make no safe assumption about skills and few about content."

STRENGTH: "Freedom to experiment . . ."

WEAKNESS: "Failure of coordination within the curriculum; failure to agree upon and state the philosophical aims of the department."

In noting their problems of sequence and articulation, teachers agreed with the comments of outside observers. In some schools where the curriculum was fully controlled, the teachers admitted its value even though preferring more freedom: "The control exercised over the teacher is good, but the teacher still chafes under it" or "The structured composition program builds good skills in formal writing but tends to stifle creativity." In schools lacking such controls, teachers were often aware of the dangers: "The fact that the program is relatively unstructured increases the chances of the poor teachers doing a very bad job." The frustration of greeting 130 students with undetermined backgrounds in English at the beginning of each year was also evident: "When talking about tragic figures we've read about before, we couldn't go too far because all students had not read the books. Is it too much to ask students to have a common background?"

Since in many schools the success of the program depended on the teacher instead of the curriculum, it was natural that the professional shortcomings of the staff should be mentioned almost as frequently by teachers as by observers. A rapid turnover of new teachers created critical problems in some schools: "There are too many young and inexperienced teachers." "Something has to be done to keep teachers from going elsewhere." On the other hand, a staff with too much stability also seemed unsatisfactory: "Resistance to change in the faculty is everywhere. Works are being taught for no particular reason. Our whole program needs reexamination." Another problem—itself a clue to why the terminal student is so often slighted—received tacit response: "Staff of would-be college teachers may be trying to convert high school into college."

The teachers as well as observers reported the indifference of some students and communities as areas of concern. Many comments related to the lack of student motivation or to the poor quality of the students in general: "Children come in here thinking they can coast by." "Social promotion is getting worse." "The average student should be challenged more." "Students are culturally lacking. They are not interested in good shows. This is a transient community—there is little cultural background in the home. The community seems middle class, but parents aren't interested." The complaint that parents had unrealistic attitudes toward college was often heard, especially in the affluent urban and suburban areas:

> The weakest thing is that too great an emphasis is placed on getting into college.
>
> We have very aggressive parents who want students to go to Eastern schools. They are very concerned with grades.
>
> The problem of working with what are often average students of wealthy parents who expect their children to go to college is very serious. Neither the parents nor the students are willing to recognize limitations in ability.

Teachers were most concerned that the learning process in English was being subordinated to the practical desires of students to be accepted by the "college of their choice."

The problem of grouping or tracking was mentioned as a weakness by some teachers in schools where it had just begun or where it had not yet been implemented. But more important was the complaint that the terminal program was inadequate, a weakness project observers had ranked second only to inadequate department leadership. Often instructional materials were lacking, the teachers preferred to teach at other levels, and the program itself was vague and fluid. Only eight teachers identified weaknesses in the comprehensive or general program, and half that number in the advanced program: twenty-eight teachers felt the program for terminal students was inadequate.

Although teachers were worried that the terminal student was being slighted, they reported at the same time that attempts to make special provisions often met with resistance from the students themselves, who insisted on using the same books as the general or even the advanced groups. Furthermore, the stigma connected with the terminal student often affected teachers who were conscious of their own status: "When I came in, there was a sense of graduation. Teachers moved, like students, from sophomore class to senior class." What was true of this old system under heterogeneous grouping is true to an even higher degree with homogeneous grouping; teachers can now triple the levels by which they accrue status, moving from 9C towards 12A!

In general, then, teachers feel that weaknesses in the schools in the National Study lie in things external to their programs, things over which they have no control. In their attitudes they agree only in part with the outside observers, who directed much of their criticism at the content and structure of the English curriculum. Programs in language, ranked fifth among weaknesses by observers, actually went unmentioned by teachers. Thus, in their interviews, teachers seem to be saying that those who can control these outside factors must help the English teachers to make their programs more effective. When problems such as poor working conditions and unrealistic community pressures have been eliminated, teachers will turn their energies to the problems they can more effectively handle. And it may be significant that in their responses teachers often talked longer about changes in the traditional content than about changes in working conditions though, in strict frequency of mention, changes in teaching conditions ranked numerically first.

A slightly different portrait of the strengths and weaknesses of the English programs was presented by ninety-six counselors (in separate schools) who completed a special questionnaire. They ranked the quality of the teaching staff above any other factor in determining the excellence of the English programs. Some, like the teachers and outside observers, also praised programs for preparing college bound students, the composition program, and the overall curriculum. However, unlike any other group, sixteen counselors mentioned remedial programs as a strength, enough to rank them second. Except in a few schools visited—by no means as many as sixteen—such programs appeared gravely deficient to both observers and teachers. Thus to discover them highly regarded here raises serious questions about the perception and judgment of some counselors and suggests a failure to distinguish between the quality and the mere existence of an offering.

When asked to identify general weaknesses in the English

Table 3

Changes in the English Program Suggested by Teachers

(n = 438 interviews)

Rank	*Characteristic*	*Number of Times Mentioned*
1	Improve Teaching Conditions	53
2	Change Language Program	45
3	Improve Sequence and Coordination	43
4	Change Literature Program	39
5	Change Composition Program	38
6	Add Specific Courses	31
7	Change Offerings for Terminal Students	29
8	Make Available More Books and Materials	27
9	Improve Grouping or Tracking	24
10	Change Offerings in Oral English	19
11.5	Define Purpose of English More Clearly	16
11.5	Select Better Teachers of English	16

program, twelve of the ninety counselors mentioned teaching conditions, twelve composition programs, and seven problems of sequence and articulation; no other issue received more than four mentions.

Certain additional insights into the overall nature of the English programs were suggested by responses of teachers to the interview question: "Which aspects of the English program would you like to see changed?" These are summarized in Table 3. Not surprisingly, teachers mentioned the need to improve working conditions more than any other factor, suggesting both smaller student loads and more instructional materials. Too often observers reported that teachers simply groaned about "more time." The following comments are typical:

> We have no time to talk with other teachers.
>
> There are too many students. I'm dead all the time. Too much.

> I would like more teacher materials, equipment. Some of these are available, but there are great scheduling problems.
>
> We have a great chain of command that loses the teacher at the other end.
>
> I would like to change the emotional climate. There is too much pressure on students and teachers.
>
> I would like to be relieved of a great deal of clerical busy work, for instance the collecting for pictures, insurance, etc.
>
> The greatest help would be to reduce the number of students.

Summaries of group interviews with 115 separate departments of English also help in evaluating the strengths and the weaknesses of these English programs. The group interviews took place under somewhat diverse conditions, held after school and attended by the department chairman and sometimes by the principal as well. The rapport in some departments was such that the participants talked freely; in others the atmosphere was stilted and noncommunicative, although frequently the very failure of a department as a whole to express its opinions prompted teachers in individual interviews to speak freely, even somewhat defensively, about the concerns of the school. Still the group interviews yielded many important insights into the nature of the English program.

They revealed, for example, that despite complaints from individual teachers, the principals in the schools are making a determined attempt not to interrupt academic classes—whether for counseling, testing, or any other purpose. In 80 percent of the schools, teachers report either that interruptions are no great problem or that the situation is "far better than in other schools."

In discussing their teaching responsibilities, most departments identified literature, language, and composition as major concerns. Speech, logic and critical thinking, and reading are also definitely accepted as responsibilities of the English program by at least two thirds of the departments, although individuals were sorely pressed to account for their exact place in the program of instruction. Like the project observers, who saw relatively little teaching in these areas, the teachers could identify few specific lessons organized primarily to teach these skills, claiming rather to "do it all the time," or "whenever I can," or "always in correcting themes." But those skills "always taught" are too often never really taught; the failure to clearly designate responsibility reveals more than anything else the prevailing indifference.

On other topics departments agreed strongly with observer reports: the schools plan virtually no study of mass media beyond a passing reference in an occasional lecture or discussion. Writing assignments tend to evolve from literary studies, but only if literature is "broadly interpreted" do teachers agree that this is proper. Many feel that such assignments should be diversified and include, especially for slow classes, writing about personal experiences.

A question on how they would spend an unexpected budget increase of three or four thousand dollars forced teachers obliquely to reveal in concrete ways certain of their attitudes concerning English instruction and provided a measure of the important resources which are at present in shortest supply. Recordings and motion pictures emerged as the two most frequent requests, both made by over one fourth of the departments interviewed. Five of the twelve most frequent requests, however, involved books: different schools reported shortages of texts, supplementary books, dictionaries, paperbacks, and classroom collections. These findings parallel those that resulted when individual teachers were asked to rate the importance of selected teaching aids and materials. Although the duplicating machine was the single most popular aid, class sets of dictionaries and other books, special texts for both slow and mature readers, language handbooks, and anthologies rated far above any such mechanical aids as television, radio, tape recorders, opaque projectors, or filmstrip projectors. Only the use of recordings was considered very important by even half of the teachers; motion pictures were supported by some 43 percent. The uses which would be made of a budget increase thus confirm reports from observers which indicated that even these highly regarded English programs often suffer from an inadequate supply of books and supplementary materials, for the most frequent requests of teachers are still for those aids which they rate separately as most essential. Only the duplicating machine among essential resources seems to be available in adequate supply.

Strengths and Weaknesses Identified by Students

The students in the 116 schools of the National Study were another important source of information which proved useful in assessing the English programs. In 99 of the schools observers solicited questionnaire responses from, and later interviewed as a group, twelfth grade college preparatory and honors classes. In some 50 schools, interviews were arranged as well with below average or slow tenth grade groups, but these yielded fewer insights into the nature of school programs both because the students were less articulate and because they lacked lengthy experience in the schools. Additional reports were secured from 124 graduates of these schools who had received NCTE Achievement Awards for excellence in English.

The reports from superior twelfth grade students reaffirm the strength of programs in literature and composition in many of these schools. Almost as many students considered these aspects of English to be "most beneficial" as mentioned all other areas combined, although particular instruction in grammar, vocabulary, reading, and the research paper was also singled out. Yet, although most beneficial, composition and literature also emerged from questionnaire responses as among the major areas in which change is needed. As the summary of suggestions in Table 4 indicates, these students feel that such programs, however beneficial, could be much better. Language programs, however, which both students and teachers readily interpret as largely grammar, led the list of suggested changes. Like the project ob-

Table 4

Changes in the English Program Suggested by Students

(n = 2,317 advanced twelfth grade students)

Rank (Total Changes)	*Area*	*More or Better*	*Less*
1	Language	226	130
2	Literature	287	64
3	Composition	338	12
4	Reading Program	197	11
5	Class Discussion	71	4
6	Vocabulary	62	5
7	Ability Grouping	30	1
8.5	Better Teachers	24	0
8.5	Speech	23	1
10	More Intensive Study	16	3
11	Student-Teacher Ratio	17	0
12	Censorship	0	11
	Satisfied with Current System	248	11

servers and even some of the teachers in the schools, students seem to find the present programs tedious and inconsequential. Though third among requests for more or better instruction, language study ranked first by a margin of better than two to one among requests for less emphasis.

Of the seniors desiring more or better work in composition, almost two thirds specified creative writing, an interest also reflected in the enthusiasm of students enrolled in special programs emphasizing such exercises. Indeed, so ardent were demands for more experiences of this kind that it would seem that the schools in the Study have given such writing short shrift. (See further discussion on this point in Chapter 6.)

In literature, students recommended more attention to modern authors, 195 asking for this change compared with 55 requesting more classics. Reading programs would also be changed if these students had their way. The students would include more abundant and diversified reading materials. Concurring with their teachers, they indicate they are too often restricted by a short supply of worthwhile titles for personal reading.

The impressions gleaned from college bound twelfth grade students were reinforced by correspondence with the 124 Awards winners enrolled in programs of higher education. This aspect of the Study, which included 34 freshmen, 35 sophomores, and 55 juniors or seniors, was initiated early to help the project staff identify critical variables. Seventy-four percent of these students affirmed that their programs seemed above average compared with those of their friends. Similarly, they indicated by a margin of seven to one that they considered their preparation for college composition above average, three quarters of the group attributing their strength in writing to their particular training in high school.

Of the major aspects of their high school English receiving heaviest criticism, grammar was again at the top of the list. Forty-three cited grammar as that phase of English which had received *too much* emphasis in their training, while other aspects of English appeared only sparingly in their responses. The college students were also concerned about areas receiving too little emphasis; speech was first with 37 citations; composition was mentioned 35 times; literature, 31; reading, 18; and grammar, 14. It may be significant that only one student stated that reading received too much emphasis, although 18 (about 14 percent) indicated it received too little.

The summaries of interviews with fifty classes of terminal students indicate an overemphasis on the mechanical aspects of English. Students repeatedly mentioned such emphases as "parts of speech," "diagraming," and ordinary "drill." (Twenty-three of the fifty summaries specifically refer to "grammar"; ten to the mechanics of punctuation and capitalization; and fifteen more to "spelling.") Other data collected during the Study suggest that for all students the emphasis on grammar and language study occurs at an early stage in their secondary education, so the emphasis here in student responses may reflect the age and grade level as well as the nature of terminal classes. Nevertheless, the summaries suggest an overwhelming stress on the mechanical analysis of textbook sentences and on the principles of formal grammar.

The nature of the writing experiences reported by tenth grade terminal classes also seems largely mechanical. There was seldom any reference to the content of their writing; more frequently the tenor of the activity was reflected by such phrases as we "write paragraphs once a week," "condense sentences," or "answer questions from *Practical English*." Seventeen of the fifty classes also reported stress on reading, which again may reflect a traditional junior high school stress upon the teaching of comprehension. According to these students, literature appears to receive comparatively little emphasis *as literature;* the little there is is being handled more through individual reading than through class assignment. Only in two or three classes did students report they have been "taught" selections—and then the selections are the traditional *Julius Caesar* or *The Merchant of Venice*, although fifteen classes mentioned oral or written book reports for which some skill in the reading of literature is of course assumed.

In general, then, the programs for tenth grade terminals—their present programs and their recollections of their junior high school experiences—seem not to emphasize literature, but to concentrate on drills, workbooks, grammar and usage, and writing exercises. It was all too clear to observers that the students, rather than indicating warmth and appreciation for such assignments, reacted negatively or at least indifferently toward English.

The Function of English

The conception of English as a content or a service subject held by both the principal and the teachers in a given school is of special importance to any program. When principals were asked what they felt to be the most important function of English, by far the most frequent single response was "communication," by which they sometimes were referring to the so-called skills of language (reading, writing, speaking, listening) and sometimes to the broader humanistic areas of literary appreciation, critical thinking, and general cultural education. When results were analyzed with this distinction in mind, it seemed clear that high school principals see as the most important function of English the instruction of students in the use of language skills. Many did maintain, however, that the objectives of English are neither adequately codified nor widely understood; others complained that existing programs lacked balance, with one aspect, be it usage or literary history, predominating.

The sometimes quiet revolution in the study of language concerned a number of principals who, though not certain *why* change was appropriate, suspected that because "linguistics" was new, their school should climb aboard the bandwagon and introduce the program. Some principals, of course, advanced more honorable reasons for curriculum change, and several indicated in their remarks some familiarity with discussions in the professional journals, if not with the research itself. A smaller group of principals, often those with knowledge of or direct experience in the John Hay Fellows Program, felt the English curriculum was developing a more humanistic emphasis. In most schools in the National Study, however, humanities courses were offered in addition to the regular English program, not in lieu of it. (See further discussion of humanities programs in Chapter 12.)

Interviews with teachers, although somewhat more specific than those with principals, indicated the same general range of attitudes toward English. One group of teachers was concerned with skill development, another with the process of thinking and the acquisition of ideas, a third with literature, values, and general cultural education. Where the teachers did differ from the principals, however, was in a much greater concern with the general personal development of the child, a goal which seemed to take precedence over any particular subject concern. Although English must be to some extent all of these things, the most startling aspect of these findings is the discrepancy between the stated goals and the classroom emphases reported by observers. The teacher who might suggest in an interview that instruction in literature should concentrate on logic or critical thinking seemed too often to find it easier in the classroom to ask students where Shakespeare was born than what Macbeth thought; the teacher who felt that the development of composition skills was his primary task too often spent his time providing composition experiences without any instruction in the skills necessary for effective written expression. Clearly, therefore, a major initial consideration in program development should be the formulation of realistic objectives that will satisfy all concerned—the teacher, the principal, and the student.

English in the Classroom

Although the subjective evaluations of observers and of individuals and groups within the schools yielded much valuable information about the programs, the visits to selected classrooms were one of the most important aspects of the Study. To guide observers during classroom observation, a special data card was designed for recording unique characteristics of the classroom: the number of minutes observed, the emphasis in content and method, the degree of pupil involvement, and related concerns. These cards were later analyzed separately, as were overall summary reports on the classroom visits completed by each observer.

In total, 32,580 minutes were observed in 1,609 classes of the 116 schools initially included in the National Study; 18.5 percent of the classes were classified as advanced or honors; 11.5 percent as terminal or slow; 42.4 percent as general or heterogeneously grouped sections. Some 27.6 percent of classes visited were grouped in ways not known to or not recorded by the observers; in most cases these classes were probably also middle or heterogeneously grouped sections. Visits to classes in schools added during later phases of the Study were analyzed separately.

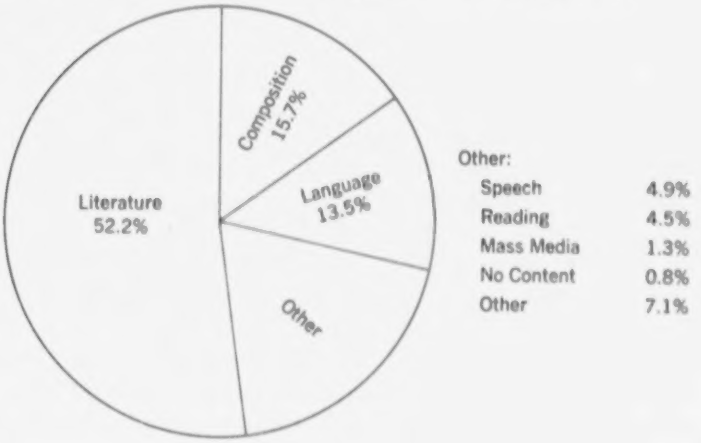
The Content of English Courses

The summaries of classroom observations present a composite portrait of English instruction today. Although only a sampling, the cumulative teaching time observed is sufficiently great to assure that uncharacteristic or unusual practices occasionally observed do not skew the entire report. Observers were forced by time limitations to arrange only visits which seemed most reasonable in view of the overall purposes of the project, relying on the recommendations of the principal or department chairman to guide them to especially outstanding classes. This, together with the inevitable tendency of insecure or inexperienced English teachers to close classes, suggests that, to the extent that observations were atypical, they were skewed to include a relatively greater number of "average" and "better" classes.

On a few occasions observers did report evidence of teachers preparing especially for their visits. In such situations a slightly greater number of student presentations and a few more study periods were encountered, but general observations indicated that the nature of instruction did not differ markedly from that in classes not making special preparations. In the judgment of the project staff, these differences were too small to alter the findings materially.

Analysis of these classroom reports led to a number of significant deductions, probably none so revealing as the tend-

Figure 2 Content Emphasis in Classroom Teaching
(32,580 minutes in 1,609 English classes in 116 schools)



ency to emphasize certain components of English almost to the exclusion of others. According to reports on 32,580 minutes of classroom observation, the teaching of literature is emphasized in the high school 52.2 percent of the time, more than all other aspects of English combined (Figure 2). In contrast, only 13.5 percent is devoted to language and 15.7 percent to composition, while other aspects of English receive even less attention.

This emphasis varies somewhat with the level and type of class, although literature received greater attention at all levels than any other aspect of English. Table 5 summarizes the findings.

It is worth noting that literature receives less emphasis in terminal classes than in classes as a whole, and less in grade ten than in grade twelve. Language instruction receives proportionally greater attention, taking almost 20 percent of all instructional time for slow students (often through usage drill sheets), and more than 20 percent of grade ten instructional time. Indeed for many students the review of grammar introduced in tenth grade classes seems to be the last formal study of the structure of English which they will encounter.

The only other perceptible shift in emphasis related to grade level or grouping is the finding that 10.4 percent of the instruc-

Table 5

Content Emphases in Tenth Grade, Twelfth Grade, and Terminal Classes

Percentage of Time Reported in:

Emphasis	*Grade 10 (n = 9,410 minutes)*	*Grade 12 (n = 9,602 minutes)*	*Terminal Classes (n = 3,618 minutes)*
Literature	46.0	61.5	40.8
Language	21.5	8.4	19.9
Composition	14.8	13.9	15.0
Speech	7.2	2.9	6.5
Reading	2.8	3.3	10.4
Mass Media	1.4	1.7	0.4
No Content	0.5	1.0	2.9
Other	5.8	7.3	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

tional time in terminal classes emphasizes the teaching of reading skills, almost double the percentage for classes in general. Somewhat more time is also devoted to formal and informal speech activity in terminal groups and in the tenth grade. More surprising is the discovery that the amount of classroom time stressing composition hovers around 15 percent regardless of type of class or grade level.

Department chairmen, however, are only slightly aware of the heavy emphasis on literature, as a special questionnaire completed by the chairmen of 104 of the original 116 schools showed. Their estimate of the percentage of time corresponded only in direction, not in intensity, to the findings of observers. At every level teachers devoted almost 15 percent *more* of their total class time to teaching literature than the department chairman estimated, and proportionately *less* to composition and language.

The findings are clear. Literature receives major emphasis throughout the program, and this emphasis increases as grade level rises. Language receives its greatest emphasis in grade ten and declines in emphasis thereafter. Not more than one seventh of classroom time is directed toward instruction in composition. Reading receives greater attention in slow classes than in others, but, in general, like speech and mass media it receives scant attention.

Additional insight into content emphasis was gleaned from interviews of department chairmen and group interviews of twelfth grade students. In most cases students were those in above-average ability groups, often those listed as Advanced Placement. One series of questions asked both chairmen and students to estimate where thirty selected concepts were taught in the English program, or if they received any emphasis at all. The thirty items were intended as a sampling, not a definitive list, of concepts that could be taught during the high school years, and were selected by the staff upon recommendation of the advisory committee after preliminary field testing indicated the value of such a device. The final concepts were chosen to be broadly representative of ideas often stressed in literature, language, and composition.

Perhaps the most significant finding is the verification which these data provided of the major stress on literature in most programs and the fragmentation of nearly all language instruction. Both chairmen and students agreed that many literary concepts are thoroughly taught. Alliteration, metaphor, blank verse, epic, satire, analogy, paradox, and allegory were known to more than 95 percent of the respondents. On the other hand, more than one third of these advanced twelfth grade students, and sometimes more than half, indicated that they had never been introduced to slanting, argumentation, determiners, nominative absolutes, consistency of diction, levels of abstraction, or euphemism. In any well-organized program of language study providing planned attention to the processes and problems of communicating through language, to semantics and symbolic logic as well as to syntax and orthography, surely most of these seven concepts would have to be treated. Such traditional matters as the conditional clause and parallel structure should and do receive attention in almost all programs, but 19.1 percent of the students and 25.4 percent of the teachers report that sentence patterns are never studied. That many schools have abandoned traditional school grammar without adopting any other is shown in the large-scale rejection of work on nominative absolutes on the one hand and of determiners on the other. The complete results for all thirty concepts are presented in Appendix D.

Trends observed in these 116 public schools were also found in the Catholic and private schools studied separately. Indeed, of 2,886 minutes of observed time in religious schools, 67 percent was given over to the study of literature, only 11 percent to composition, and 10 percent to language. In the independent schools, of 2,950 minutes observed, 82 percent was devoted to literature, 4 percent to composition, and 7 percent to language. Certain unique characteristics which pertain especially to the boarding schools in these groups should, however, be noted here. Instruction in composition, for example, is often handled through individual conference sessions, if not outright tutorials, that occur frequently in the independent schools, and this time of course does not show in these statistics.

Similarly, attention to language, speech, and reading appeared comparable to that reported for public schools, although the overwhelming majority of private schools do not provide any direct instruction in either of the latter areas. They do, however, encourage student production of plays, provide opportunities for debate, and, most importantly, require constant student involvement in the classroom dialogue; the classroom emphasis on literature at the same time assures that students will read constantly and at a fairly rapid rate just to keep up to the pace.

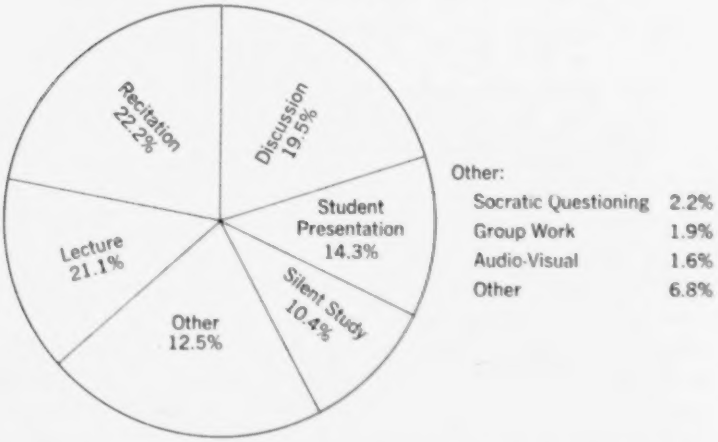
Teaching Methods and Materials

If literature dominates the content of the typical English class, lecture and recitation dominate its presentation. Figure 3 summarizes the methods of teaching during the 32,580 minutes of class time observed in the original 116 schools. Observers in each case ranked the three major emphases in each class, but, as overall rankings vary only slightly even when all three emphases are combined, data here are based on only the most frequently used method from each class.

The data clearly show that in most schools the classrooms are teacher-dominated. Recitation, with its frequent emphasis on simple factual recall and lecture or demonstration, occupies more than 20 percent of class time. Too seldom during such activities do the students actually seem involved in the learning at hand. Although carefully planned periods of lecture and recitation can be useful, far more frequent was the teacher who found he must explain, tell, or amplify because students were not responding to his questions.

Indeed, it is a surprising discovery that discussion, the basic approach through which ideas can be developed and skills of thinking taught in the classroom, is used only 19.5 percent of the time. Since only a very few teachers resorted to group work or Socratic questioning, emphasis on the active process of thinking through the expression of ideas in language, essential to all forms of discussion, does not receive attention more than one fourth of the time. One wonders where, if not in English class, students will learn to use language in discussion situations. Although ob-

Figure 3 Methods Emphasized in Classroom Teaching
(32,580 minutes in 1,609 classrooms in 116 schools)



servers witnessed some excellent discussions, they reported a great number of teachers who confused discussion and recitation or who lacked skill in the art of questioning. Too many questions dealt with outside issues, led nowhere, or required only a superficial response.

An obvious discrepancy between what teachers hope to do and what they actually do in the classroom appeared when teachers were asked on individual questionnaires to rank their own practices. In contrast to the approximately 20 percent of class time devoted to discussion, noted by observers, the large majority of teachers reported that they give discussion first priority. If Socratic questioning were to be combined with discussion, 70 percent of all teachers say that they depend on these approaches above all others—a condition that simply does not obtain even in these selected high schools. This important problem is discussed in detail in Chapter 5 as part of the consideration of approaches to the teaching of literature, and at that point the more successful efforts at discussion found in independent schools are considered.

In sharp contrast to the low percentage of time emphasizing discussion, 14 percent of instructional time emphasized student presentation, usually in the form of oral reports but sometimes involving panel discussions or plays. Next in frequency of emphasis was silent work, involving normal reading or writing periods. Although these percentages are probably high because of the tendency of an occasional teacher to substitute student activity for his own when under observation, the importance of providing carefully guided reading and writing under the direction of the English teacher has been so emphasized during recent years that even 10 percent is probably minimal.[3] Of the 14 percent of time devoted to student presentation, much seems focused on oral book reports of no relevance to instruction, reports which provide a useful activity for one student at the expense of thirty others. Specialists in the teaching of English who have long recommended that other oral activities be substituted for the formal book report have yet to influence many teachers in the schools.

A comparison of the teaching procedures used in tenth and twelfth grade classes reveals only one major difference. Of all tenth grade class time, about 29 percent is devoted to recitation, a percentage which falls to 21 percent during the senior year. The emphasis on discussion changes inversely, from 15 percent in grade ten to 21 percent in grade twelve. These changes undoubtedly reflect varying content. The proportionately greater emphasis on language study which we have noted in grade ten leads to a great many oral usage drills and class recitations on the elements of the English language. Class discussion, on the other hand, with its emphasis on interpretation, sharing of opinions, and generalization, is more likely associated with the teaching of literature, and it accordingly increases as the emphasis on literature rises in the upper grades.

One curious tendency reflects the uncertainty of teachers concerning the teaching of speech. Although observers found the tenth grade to be the level where formal and informal speech is likely to receive greatest stress (7 percent declining to 3 percent in grade twelve), discussion and Socratic questioning receive less attention at this level than later, while the percentage of class time devoted to student presentation remains constant.

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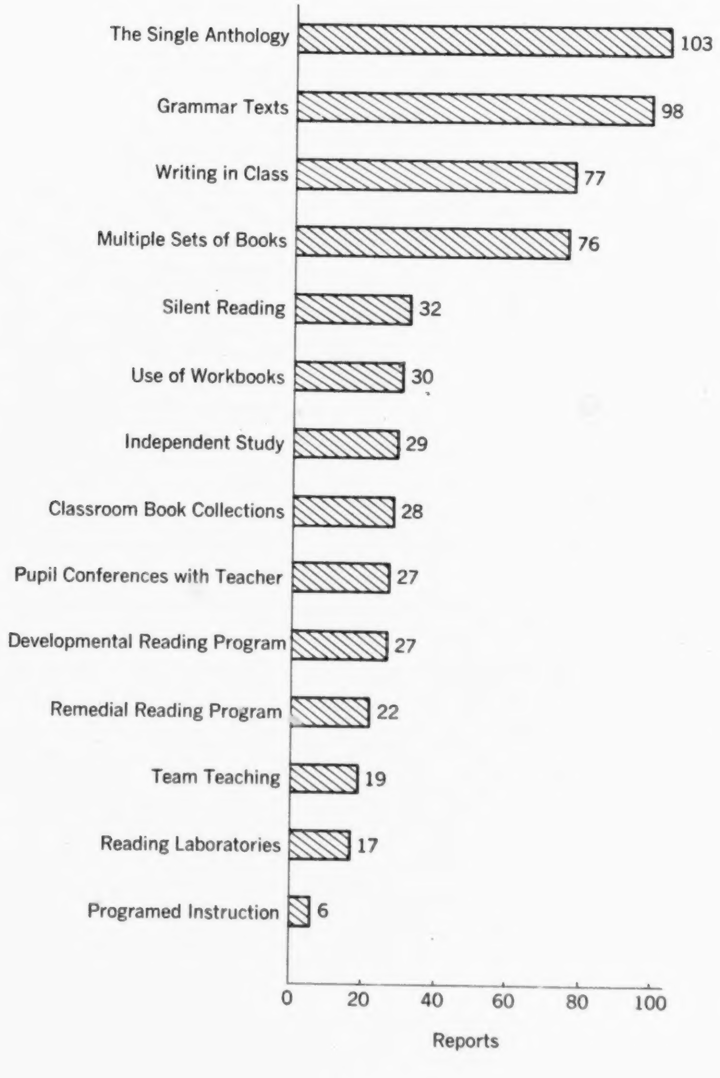
[3] See, for example, Paul Diederich, "The Rutgers Plan for Cutting Class Size in Two," *English Journal*, XLIV (April 1960), pp. 229–23 266; Arno Jewett and Clarence Bish, *Improving English Composition* (Washington, D.C., National Education Association, 1964).

Teachers do modify their approaches to teaching when faced with slow learners. They rely more on recitations requiring simple factual answers (28 percent of class time) and on silent work (20 percent). They decrease the emphasis on class discussion (from 19.5 percent to 9 percent) and on student presentation (14 percent to 8 percent). Although some individual teachers were found to achieve brilliant results, the majority relied on highly mechanical activities—exercises in reading and usage, recitations dealing only with facts, study questions, and workbooks. Regrettably, with slow learners who often respond particularly well to auditory and visual approaches to learning, the teachers in terminal classes use audiovisual equipment only 1.2 percent of the time, slightly less than do English teachers in general. A slight increase in Socratic questioning from 2.2 percent to 3.2 percent of class time is perhaps a hopeful sign, but the number of minutes observed is small, and the increase seems attributable to the success of a few unique teachers.

In the reports summarizing their classroom observation in each school, observers were asked to indicate the relative presence or absence in the English program of thirteen teaching practices widely discussed in current professional writing. The practices, which ranged from the teaching of remedial reading to the use of teacher-pupil conferences, were thought by the advisory committee and the project staff to be sufficiently important to deserve special attention. The summary reports on the frequency of these thirteen practices supplement the assessment of emphasis in classroom teaching previously reported.

The data in Figure 4 indicate those practices widely or frequently used by teachers in the schools. Clearly, reliance on single texts, either language or literature, for all students in a class remains characteristic of much instruction in English, al-

Figure 4 Selected Practices Reported in Widespread or Frequent Use
(187 reports on 107 schools)



though a considerable use of multiple sets of books, most often literature texts, and classroom book collections are reported in some schools. It should be noted, however, that in only 55 percent of the summaries were observers able to report the use of the single anthology as widespread or frequent, even though the practice ranks first among those most characteristic of schools in the Study. Similarly, the presence of grammar texts, ranked second, is reported in frequent or widespread use in only 52 percent of the reports.

This diversity is perhaps the most striking characteristic of the schools observed; observers were surely in greater agreement about what they did *not* see than about what they did see. It was reported by 83 percent of the observers that programed instruction was seldom or never used; 72 percent reported little or no evidence of team teaching in the schools. Indeed, six of these practices—programed instruction, team teaching, classroom book collections, reading laboratories, workbooks, and developmental reading programs—were reported as seldom or never used a greater number of times than any other specific practices which observers were asked to investigate (see Figure 4).

With the possible exception of the use of multiple textbooks, ranked fourth in Figure 4, the practices reported as widespread are well established. That programed instruction, team teaching, reading laboratories, and classroom book collections—integral features of many innovative programs today—are ranked as the least frequently observed of any practices supports this deduction. Partially because so few of the 116 original schools were committed to innovative action, a special second phase of the Study directed its attention to the teaching of English in schools known to be developing experimental programs. (See Chapter 12.)

The summary reactions to all classroom observations, like the reports presented earlier, confirm the impression that few unusual, radically different, or highly innovative practices characterize the English programs studied. The teaching of English in these schools stresses literature at all levels; reveals a major stress on language in grade ten; relies excessively on recitation, lecture, and discussion in the classroom; and utilizes such a variety of practices to advance English instruction that no one procedure, except the use of class sets of books, characterizes more than half of the observed schools.

Summary

A broad, cumulative analysis by the project staff, supported by classroom observation, questionnaire surveys, and group and individual interviews, provides a comprehensive view and assessment of English programs in 116 schools reported to be achieving important results in English. This assessment delineates a number of common characteristics: (1) effective and intelligent leadership on the part of school administrators and department chairmen; (2) general competence and excellence of English faculties; (3) adequate supplies of books, instructional materials, and other resources; (4) reasonable teaching conditions.

Most likely because project observers are in a position to view with some degree of objectivity the potential of many school staffs, they regarded adequate department leadership more highly than did the respective teachers, many of whom presumably had never been exposed to the influence of a competent chairman with sufficient time and responsibility to fulfill his important function. On their part, teachers valued highly the atmosphere of professional freedom which left to the individual teacher the natural responsibility of deciding what and how to teach, though to observers and even some teachers such freedom often seemed to border on anarchy. For the majority of schools, it was clear that more instead of less control was needed.

According to teachers and students as well as project observers, the English curriculums in these 116 schools showed a disturbing lack of sequence and structure. In the broad area of language especially, there seems to be no agreement on content, emphasis, or sequence. To wholly ignore certain or even all phases of instruction in language, as some schools were found to be doing, is a dubious pedagogical decision.

Literature received more emphasis in the classroom than all other aspects of English combined, thereby accounting for reports of the higher quality of instruction in literature, especially in programs for college bound students. Programs of instruction in composition were also generally praised. Certainly the evidence everywhere indicates far more certainty concerning the what and how of literature and composition than of any of the other aspects of English. Though claiming an interest in such matters, teachers were negligent in the teaching of speech and reading in their classrooms. The study of mass media, perhaps not yet established as a legitimate aspect of the English program, received virtually no attention.

Project reports also verify that, in these schools at least, innovations with scheduling and teaching procedure are comparatively unimportant. As expected, the teachers achieve orthodox results through reliance on discussion, recitation, and lecture, supported by independent study and some oral presentation. Radical experiments with scheduling or modern study gimmicks are hardly evident; where introduced they seem less important for what they contribute to effectiveness of instruction than for what they contribute to school atmosphere. A lively intellectual or academic climate that is characteristic of many schools was, more often than not, engendered either by the building principal or by the tradition of the community. The unique quality of the students—whether upper middle class children from wealthy suburban areas or less well-to-do city or small town children in comprehensive schools—seems less important than the tradition of learning which, though established and perpetuated by parental ambitions, does not automatically emerge at a given socioeconomic level.

In their final assessment of the English programs, project observers were instructed to rank sixteen dimensions of each program on a seven point scale ranging from outstanding to inadequate. The results indicate not only the diversity of the programs, but also certain central characteristics of the schools. The highest mean rating—3.0 on the seven point scale—represents the presence in the schools of "certain unique teachers" who raise the level of instruction. In 118 of 176 cumulative reports, the contributions of such teachers are significant enough to receive a ranking in the first three categories. In contrast, the lowest mean ranking (4.8) represents programs for the terminal student, an overriding weakness in many school programs. In 108 of 181 reports, the programs for terminal students were assigned one of the three lowest ranks; in only 35 reports were such programs rated 3.0 or higher.

In ten of the sixteen dimensions, the majority of the 116 English programs seemed stronger than those of the average school; these dimensions by rank were: (1) intellectual climate of the school, (2) quality of English teachers, (3) support of the program by building administrators, (4) use of a variety of methods, (5) quality of student response in discussion, (6) teacher's leadership in discussion, (7) emphasis on ideas in literature, (8) size and accessibility of the library, (9) varied program in composition, (10) reasonable coordination of language, literature, and composition.

On the same scale, four areas of weakness emerge from this assessment: (1) general ineffectiveness of many department chairmen, (2) lack of variety in available teaching materials, (3) inadequate provision for teaching reading, and (4) neglect of English programs for terminal students. All four have been discussed earlier in this chapter.

Perhaps the most consistent finding has been the great variability which exists from school to school. More than twenty specific factors were found in the course of this analysis to be integrally related to the excellence of a given program, yet there was no single school which reflected all these characteristics. This alone should encourage those departments which, for a variety of reasons, find that emulating all recommended practices is an impossible task, while pointing the way for already strong departments to grow even better by direct attention to areas of present neglect.

CHAPTER 3

The Teacher of English

Important contributions of uniquely capable teachers of English on the faculties of the 116 schools of the National Study were apparent to all observers. An examination of the qualifications and professional commitment of these teachers and the conditions under which they teach have considerable implications for American schools. An earlier survey, reported by NCTE in *The National Interest and the Continuing Education of Teachers of English*, provides data for English teachers nationally with which the results of the present Study can be compared.[1] Although itself probably an optimistic statement of conditions, depending as it did for its data on responses of teachers selected by the schools involved, the NCTE survey included junior high schools, which have a greater proportion of teachers with majors in subjects other than English. It seems likely that these two biases counterbalance, providing roughly comparable data for comparison with the schools of the National Study. In any event, the comparison demonstrates that the quality of the faculties in Study schools is in fact unique, and that the superior preparation and commitment of the teachers are indeed major factors in the excellence of the English programs chosen for study.

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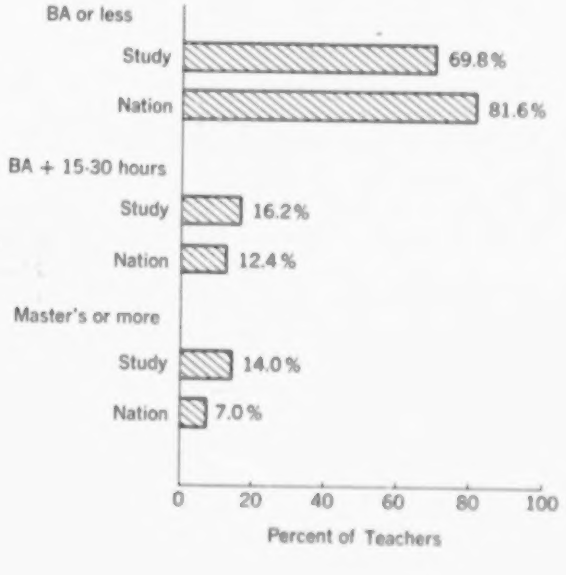
[1] Committee on the National Interest, *The National Interest and the Continuing Education of Teachers of English* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1964).

Preparation

The responses of 1,331 teachers to the Study questionnaire indicate that their initial preparation is substantially better than that of teachers nationally. Figure 5 indicates that 30 percent of these teachers had 15 or more hours of graduate training before beginning to teach, 10 percent more than teachers in the NCTE survey. Twice as many already had at least a Master's degree. Equally important, only 5.9 percent did *not* have a B.A. when they began to teach, exactly half the percentage reported for teachers nationally. Striking differences also are found in the kinds of institutions where undergraduate work was completed: more than 78 percent of the teachers in Study schools were from universities or liberal arts colleges, again 10 percent more of these teachers than of teachers nationally. This difference

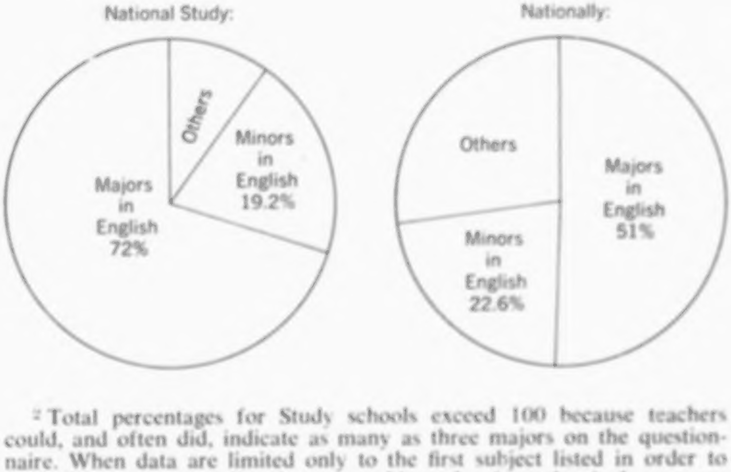
Figure 5 Level of Preparation When Beginning Full-Time Teaching



results entirely from the greater proportion of Study teachers attending universities, 46.8 percent compared with 31.8 percent nationally.

The heavy emphasis on subject matter in most university curriculums, as contrasted with programs in a teachers' college curriculum, may characterize the preparatory programs of many of these teachers. Such an assumption is supported by the summary of undergraduate studies given in Figure 6. In Study schools over 90 percent of the teachers had direct preparation in English compared with less than 75 percent of teachers in the NCTE survey. Of those who did not major in English, more than two thirds of the teachers in the Study, but less than half of the teachers nationally, indicated at least a minor in the field. Another 28 percent [2] of the teachers in the present Study noted

Figure 6 Undergraduate Studies Reported by Teachers



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[2] Total percentages for Study schools exceed 100 because teachers could, and often did, indicate as many as three majors on the questionnaire. When data are limited only to the first subject listed in order to make the results more directly comparable to that from the single response allowed in the earlier survey, 68.8 percent of the teachers report an undergraduate major in English, 13 percent a major in a directly related field. Thus 82 percent of the English teachers in schools with superior programs in English have an undergraduate preparation directly related to their field, compared to only 67 percent in the more random sample of high schools nationally.

majors in directly related fields such as speech, journalism, language arts, or drama.

In light of the current disfavor in which undergraduate programs in education are often held, it is interesting to note that almost 15 percent of the teachers in the Study reported education majors, and another 20 percent noted minors in that field; both figures were greater than those found in the NCTE survey. When 424 teachers were later asked in personal interviews what individuals or experiences had had the greatest influence on the way they taught, more than half of the individuals named as most influential were either professors of English education or teachers of methods courses, in spite of the relatively small proportion of time actually spent in such classes.

The teachers in the National Study are also well prepared in other areas relevant to English instruction. One fourth noted minors in a modern foreign language, almost as many in history, another 18 percent in the more directly related fields of speech, drama, language arts, and journalism. Such broad backgrounds are important if the English teacher is to make his instruction rich and truly liberal for students; unfortunately they also mean that in certain schools these teachers are sometimes called upon to divide their energies between English and another discipline. The considerable specialized training in related areas of the language arts is especially encouraging when one considers how infrequently such subjects as speech, reading, journalism, or drama are offered or taken as electives by the students; with the education reported by Study teachers, there is at least the potential for competent treatment of these areas in the required English courses.

Continuing Education

Teachers of English in these specially selected schools not only are well qualified initially but also continue their education after beginning to teach. Since beginning to teach, 43 percent have earned a degree, a number particularly surprising since one fourth of the teachers had been teaching less than two years. Fully 36.5 percent had acquired at least a Master's degree since beginning full-time teaching. An additional 14 percent had achieved this level of education when they began teaching; thus, over half of the teachers of English in schools with outstanding programs continue their education at least to the Master's level. Unfortunately, the national average for all secondary school teachers is only 35.3 percent.[3]

During the two years prior to the Study, more than 40 percent of the teachers had completed a graduate English course, 37 percent a graduate education course. Another 43 percent had taken part in a voluntary English workshop, while fully 70.8 percent had conferred with an English specialist. In other ways, however, an ambiguous picture emerges. Although only 14.9 percent of the teachers surveyed had not completed a college level course since graduation, 42 percent had not taken an English course in the last five years. This percentage is essentially identical with findings of the earlier NCTE national survey of teachers. Even with the incentive of school board and certification requirements for continuing education, only 23.4 percent of all teachers in the National Study have taken English courses during the past year. A similar portrait emerges with respect to education courses: almost 17 percent of the teachers have taken no course since graduation, and for another 46 percent it has been at least five years.

In light of the observation that the majority of classes observed in the schools dealt with literature and comparatively few with language or composition, it is interesting to note the kinds of courses teachers have taken or would prefer to take. Paralleling the classroom emphasis, 59.8 percent of the teachers have taken one or more literature courses since beginning to teach, only 25 percent have taken any in composition, and only 34 percent any in language. As a further index to the stress placed on literature, teachers in this Study consistently rated literature courses high on a scale of potential value and interest, in contrast to the teachers in the NCTE survey who were more interested in composition and methods courses. In their responses, however, both groups of teachers indicate rather overwhelming interest in *all* courses, whether literature, language, composition, methods, reading, or curriculum.[4]

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[3] NEA Research Division, *Teacher Supply and Demand in Public Schools*, 1963, Research Report 1963-R4 (Washington, D.C., National Education Association, May 1963).

The responses of the total group of teachers were compared with those of a select group of 130 whom project observers singled out as outstanding on the basis of their classroom performance and their impact on the program as a whole. Although the selection of gifted teachers was necessarily subjective, the results seem to indicate that the differences noted between teachers nationally and teachers in schools of the National Study are variables which do affect their success in the classroom. The outstanding teachers are slightly better prepared in terms of formal education, with almost 78 percent indicating an undergraduate major in English and 69 percent earning a degree since beginning full-time teaching. These teachers also reported completing substantially more hours in each of the major areas of language, literature, and composition, as well as in methods courses, since beginning to teach.

The outstanding teachers were more interested in advanced courses that might include close attention to literary genre, to study of single authors and works, and to advanced studies in curriculum than in the more practical methods and survey courses that appeal to the majority of English teachers. At the other end of the scale, 47.7 percent of the outstanding teachers felt that a course in traditional grammar would have no value or interest whatsoever, in contrast with 32.1 percent of the total group.

The data on continuing education speak well for the English teacher's concern with his own academic growth, but they suggest, also, that much inservice study results from highly individual effort from which the schools may not be receiving maximum benefit. The individual teachers indicate a strong preference for courses in literature and clearly are likely to avoid studies of language, composition, or curriculum development. But an English department needs specialists in all areas of English teaching. Probably school administrators need to keep close watch on balance in instruction and especially on balance in the continuing education of the English faculty as a whole, and they must, when necessary, assume the responsibility for providing or ensuring adequate continuing education in areas necessary to the department but perhaps of less interest to the individual teacher.

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[4] The complete evaluations are included in Appendix D.

To assess the extent to which schools assume any responsibility for continuing education, the project staff asked English chairmen to rank, according to importance, various techniques for providing inservice education; the department meeting led all other methods by a margin of almost two to one. Together with conferences with teachers and summer courses, in fact, such responses accounted for almost 60 percent of replies, followed by special workshops and attendance at professional meetings. According to the chairmen, demonstration teaching, institutes, classroom intervisitation, and outside consultants are very rarely used.

The department meeting, if carefully structured, can provide an organized program for extending knowledge about trends in the various disciplines of English; it is an even more natural vehicle for demonstrating their use. A substantial number of chairmen, however, lack time to prepare adequately for such sessions. Although they reported that department meetings were frequently used to provide continued education for the English faculty, many could not recall any topic of substance which had been explored in such meetings. While reports of "discussions of approaches to teaching the novel," "reports on summer workshops," or "demonstration grading of a set of compositions" may indicate at least a minimal program of inservice education, meetings devoted only to "the need for more compositions," "decisions on what books will be taught at what levels this year," or to obviously administrative topics, combined with failure to mention more formal programs, suggest that the meetings are not being used to further continuing education at all. Using these criteria in evaluating transcripts of 108 usable interviews, the staff estimated that 58 percent of the chairmen do not actually use the department meeting as an inservice training device. Occasional visits by project observers to regular meetings of the English faculties only reaffirmed the impression that too many such sessions are haphazard, unplanned, and devoted only to routine matters better handled through mimeographed forms or department newsletters.

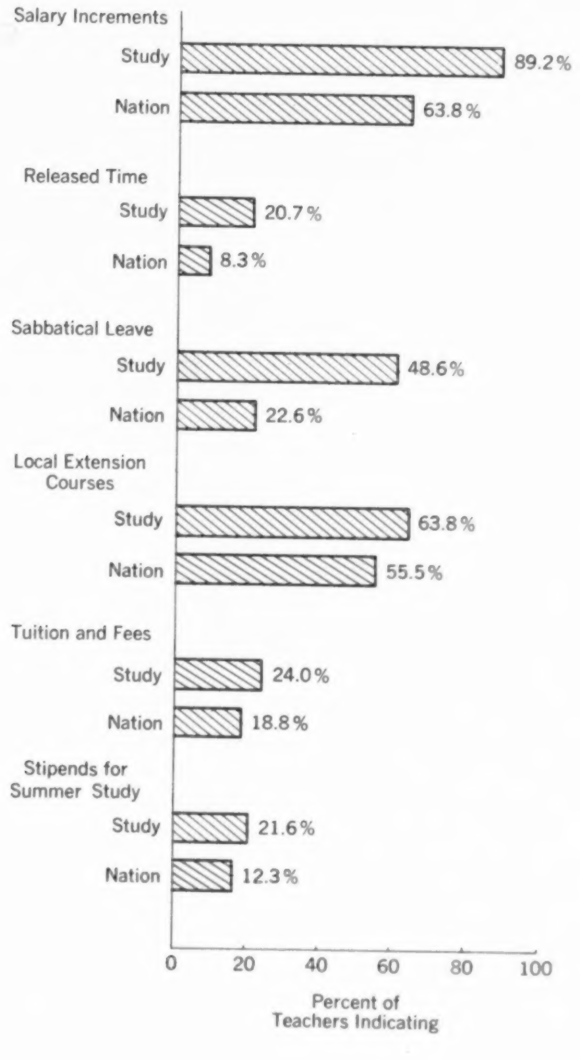
Clearly, also, several other unique and valuable approaches to continuing education are not fully utilized. Demonstration teaching, for example, is almost never used, and yet it can be one of the more palatable means of introducing new teaching ideas to a faculty. In a sense, the experienced teacher is justified in his reluctance to take part in formal methods courses where, if he has been at all deliberate in his own development, he has already examined much that is discussed. Demonstration teaching, however, provides a means to consider specific materials and content immediately relevant to the teacher's problems, and it provides them in sufficient detail for critical evaluation. In a similar fashion, meetings with outside consultants can provide specific assistance of great value to the teacher without the time to meet the demands of a formal college course. Unfortunately, such approaches are not introduced frequently enough in programs of continuing education.

The department chairman (who knows the program, the teachers, and the students) is in an unusually strong position to organize inservice activities which may have a direct effect on the classroom. In many of the better schools, carefully structured programs have been developed to provide consultant service, to introduce teachers to new materials and techniques, and to ensure well-planned demonstration teaching sessions, but most project observers were alarmed that so many school systems and English departments seem to have adopted an unstructured approach to continuing education. In the typical situation, teachers are required to earn a certain number of graduate credits over a specified period of time, *x* number of credits every five years or so. On rare occasions the distribution of these credits between education and English courses is also controlled. Such an approach is easily administered and represents great respect for the teacher's professionalism, but the negative results are also clear. As the data presented earlier in this chapter indicate, the English teacher left to his own devices is almost certain to take another course in literature. Such courses have perhaps the most immediate classroom value and encourage the introduction of new insights and fresh material, yet the high school curriculum is not based exclusively on literature. The instruction in language and composition, as well as the writing assignments and evaluations of compositions sampled by the observers, clearly shows that the English teachers would benefit from intensive inservice programs in language and composition. One hesitates to suggest that yet another system of regulations be imposed upon the already overrestricted teacher, yet it is clear that schools must be sure that their faculty will have the general competence and flexibility necessary to the improvement of the curriculum.

The schools in the Study do provide far greater incentives for individual teachers to continue their education than do most schools nationally. Data in Figure 7 indicate, for example, that over 89 percent of schools in the Study, compared with only 64 percent nationally, encourage continuing education through salary incentives. Almost two thirds also encourage the organization of local extension courses, half grant sabbatical leave to teachers, one quarter will on occasion underwrite tuition and fees for outside courses, at least 20 percent pay stipends for summer study or release teachers for inservice work. So striking are the differences in this respect between the Study schools and those in the national NCTE sampling that it appears that the adoption of rather extensive incentives to encourage inservice education is one of the unique characteristics of schools with strong English programs.

The teachers in the schools studied find other opportunities for continuing education. For example, 31 percent report that they have received grants or fellowships for advanced study, a figure more than three times larger than that reported in the NCTE survey of schools nationally. The difference in miscellaneous and locally sponsored grants received—4.9 percent of teach-

Figure 7 Incentives to Continuing Education Provided by the Schools



ers nationally, over 20 percent in the Study schools—indicates the effectiveness of school and community centered programs and hints again at the importance of the traditions and support of the community in determining the excellence of the program as a whole. Because data on this question were collected during the 1964–1965 academic year, they do not reflect the impact of recently inaugurated programs of the National Defense Education Act providing summer institute and teacher fellowship programs.

A well-educated staff that strives to continue its education thus seems to be characteristic of schools with strong English programs. Although observers were critical of opportunities misused or overlooked, the evidence suggests that a substantial number of teachers and schools in the Study are striving for self-improvement. The very selection of some of the schools for inclusion in the Study may have been the result of teachers who were known and respected by college and university instructors.

Professional Activities

The project staff was interested in the evidence of professionalism among teachers in programs noted for excellence in English. Much of the success achieved by any of these programs must have resulted from considerable self-evaluation and self-improvement on the part of individual teachers and a professional approach to the task of teaching. It was expected that the English teachers in these better programs would be more current in their knowledge of the profession, be more active in the professional organizations, do more independent professional reading, publish more, and be more capable of objective evaluation of their own teaching efforts. The resulting composite, which may be called the professionalism of the teachers in this Study, is highly favorable. Indeed, from a subjective standpoint, the cooperation of the more than 1,500 teachers participating in this Study was indicative of their professional attitudes, particularly in view of the demands made upon their already oversubscribed time. Returns on long, complex questionnaires ran well over 80 percent, observers were well received in the schools and welcomed into classrooms, and long interviews and longer department meetings were conducted with the full cooperation of the teachers.

A serious attempt was made by the project staff to gather objective reflections of professional commitment: data on membership and participation in professional organizations, on the amount of professional writing and reading done by the teachers, and on the way they spend their time outside the school day. Although somewhat more mixed than other indications of professional commitment, these figures again reflected a generally high level of professionalism among the English teachers in this survey.

Suprisingly, the teachers in these schools do not differ markedly from average teachers in schools throughout the country in their participation in professional meetings, particularly at the local, regional, or state levels. About 25 percent rarely participate in local or regional English meetings, almost 50 percent do not participate in state meetings (a few states do not have English associations), and three quarters do not take part in national meetings. More than half had participated within the previous year in local or regional meetings and one third in state meetings, percentages slightly below those reported nationally. The lack of any clear distinction in such participation between these teachers and teachers nationally is somewhat curious in view of their superior preparation and obvious interest in subject matter concerns.

Differences in professional involvement do begin to emerge, however, when professional reading and membership in associations are compared. More than half of all teachers in this Study, but less than one third of English teachers nationally, are members of the National Council of Teachers of English, as Table 6 shows. Twice as many teachers in these schools belong to state, local, and regional English associations, and many others have joined the National Education Association. Over 83 percent of the teachers in the Study schools regularly read the *English Journal*, again twice the percentage reported in the national

Table 6

Membership in Professional Associations

Percentage of Teachers Responding

	NCTE	*State English*	*Regional English*	*Local English*	*NEA*	*State Educational Association*	*Regional Educational Association*	*AFT*
National Study *(n = 1,331)*	52.4	45.9	21.5	37.2	59.2	73.1	59.2	5.2
NCTE Survey *(n = 7,417)*	34.6	27.8	9.7	18.2	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data

sampling. Moreover, almost one third of the teachers regularly read *College English,* a sharp contrast with the 5.4 percent reported nationally. These trends were confirmed in the analysis of the responses of 130 outstanding teachers selected by the observers for special study: they not only belonged to more local, regional, state, and national organizations, but also read their journals more faithfully than the total group of Study teachers or of teachers nationally. It would seem that if the majority of the teachers in these strong English programs do not attend professional meetings more regularly than their colleagues elsewhere, they are at least more familiar with developments reported in the professional literature.

Interested in the activities in which the teachers in these schools engaged during nonteaching hours, the project staff asked them to estimate the number of hours per week and per month devoted to outside personal and cultural activities; their responses show that the average teacher finds little time for any activities other than reading. Visiting museums, listening to lectures, viewing movies, or even watching television are relatively rare for 75 percent of the teachers, and they were reported even less frequently by the 130 teachers judged to be outstanding. Some 16 percent reported outside employment, a low figure resulting in part from the large proportion of married women in the group, women whose salaries may already represent supplementary family income. Even during the summer, a total of only 20 percent of the teachers were involved in employment unrelated to teaching or in personal or family recreation. As a whole these teachers seem willing to sacrifice many personal pleasures to meet their professional obligations.

As a group, too, the teachers seem widely traveled. Virtually all have been more than 500 miles from where they are teaching; 70 percent have done so during the previous year. Three quarters of the teachers have visited either Canada or Mexico, the data indicating that these trips are even more frequent than the travel across the United States which two thirds of the teachers report. Regrettably, perhaps, only 26.2 percent of these teachers have been to Great Britain and only a slightly higher percentage to other countries.

Finally, the staff of the National Study was interested in the extent to which these teachers evidence concern with the problems of the profession through publishing and participation on programs at professional meetings. Here the figures are not entirely happy ones; although these represent some of the best trained teachers with the greatest opportunities to investigate new approaches to the teaching of English, fewer than 2 percent have published books, and only 9 percent have written for professional journals. While one can appreciate that the demands on their time are too great to expect many books, the spread of information aimed at the improvement of instruction must be severely limited if teachers with such strong preparation do not write at least occasionally for the journals. The 29 percent who report participating in programs at professional meetings is more encouraging but by no means offsets the serious neglect of professional publication.

The data available on the continuing education of the 1,331 teachers in the Study schools indicate that as a group they seem to be more involved than most in developments in the profession. Initially well prepared for their teaching responsibilities, they join most professional associations available, though their active participation is not as great as would be expected. For the most part their continuing source of contact with their profession comes through professional journals, although a small group regularly enrolls in extension and college courses and almost one third have received stipends to support summer or sabbatical study. Reasonably widely traveled in North America, if not in other countries, the teachers are limited in time and perhaps opportunity to engage in professional and cultural activities other than reading. The findings suggest the importance to school programs of making available particularly valuable professional books and journals, no less than organized programs of inservice education involving released time, sabbatical and stipend incentives, and carefully structured meetings and workshops. Not the least strength of English programs in this Study may be the direct result of such conscious incentives to continuing education.

Teaching Conditions

The conditions under which English is taught in the 116 schools selected for their strong programs in English are at best only slightly more conducive to good teaching than those reported in other national studies. Class load, for example, resembles that found in the earlier NCTE survey, with the largest percentage of teachers meeting five classes a day. Schools tend to cluster tightly around four and five classes a day, as Figure 8 indicates, although in the NCTE sampling a somewhat greater proportion of the responses occurred at one, two, three, and six classes. The very light class loads among the figures nationally may quite possibly reflect a greater percentage of part-time teachers than are involved in Study schools; the very heavy loads reflect extreme conditions which most of the Study schools avoid.

Reports on number of students met each day are also quite similar to the results of the NCTE survey. The average remains at 130 students, still a long way from the maximum of 100 recommended by NCTE and other professional groups,[5] and the

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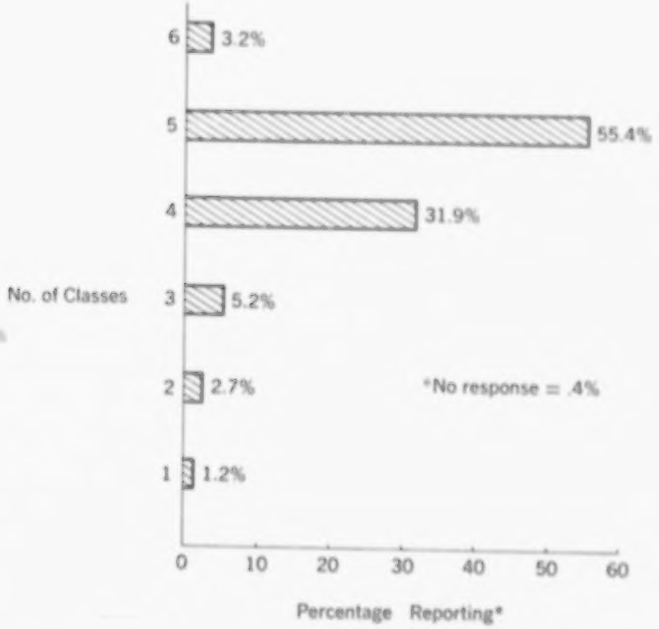
[5] See for example, the report of the Committee on the National Interest, *op. cit.*, p. 96.

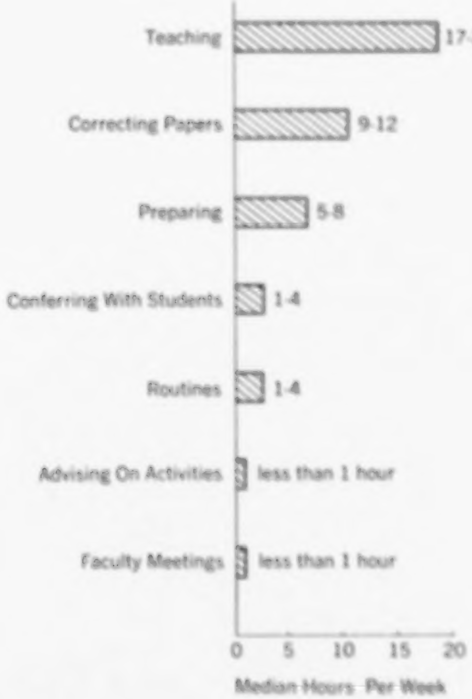
Figure 8 **Classes Taught Each Day**



21 percent of the teachers who indicated loads of 100 or less is but slight improvement over the 19.4 percent reported in the NCTE survey, although few very small schools are involved in the Study itself. Again, however, extreme conditions are avoided by Study schools, only 16 percent of whose teachers, in contrast to over 25 percent nationally, report loads of over 150 students.

The teachers in the Study schools devote long hours weekly to professional activities. A large majority, 79 percent of those surveyed, report a work week of forty-one to sixty hours, divided among their many responsibilities; for almost half of these teachers the week is at least fifty hours long. Again presenting data comparable to that collected in the earlier NCTE survey, the summary of workload in Figure 9 suggests that the average teacher spends at most half of his time in the classroom; in fact,

Figure 9 **Workload of the Average Teacher**



50 percent of the teachers surveyed were teaching less than twenty hours a week. Preparing for class and correcting papers, involving eight or less and twelve or less hours per week respectively, are the other major demands on the teacher's time. The results of the separate analysis of the responses of the 130 teachers selected by observers as especially outstanding differed very little, although they spent slightly more time correcting papers and were more involved in student activities than the group as a whole.

It would seem, therefore, that if the teacher of English feels there is not enough time to do the job he would like to do, it is because he is overtaxed, not because he is overworked. Surely an average of forty-one to fifty hours per week should not seem excessive for a professional person, but Figure 9 suggests that the majority of teachers may not even spend forty hours on activities directly associated with their areas of professional competence. Perhaps teachers of English would do a better job if the trivia associated with teaching were removed rather than if the work week were reduced. The necessity of attending meetings, monitoring study halls, handling paper work, and the other routines which occupy the school day may well leave him little inclination to investigate alternatives to a highly mechanical approach to teaching.

Individual interviews with 438 of the 1,331 teachers in the Study substantiate the impression that it is not the teaching load alone but the general conditions under which English is taught which most concern those in these schools. An analysis of recorded interviews indicated little agreement on "the most disappointing aspect of teaching high school English," but the teachers were obviously not disappointed with their salaries, nor did they pinpoint "teaching load" in any specific way. Instead, most reflected an ill-defined sense of frustration and harassment. The resentment against "the administration," usually not directed against the school principal as much as "the establishment," appears in individual comments: "It wears me down"; "It gets harder and harder." Of course, the impossible paper load of many teachers was mentioned again and again, and several admitted applying for positions as counselor or teacher of mathematics solely to escape this burden. It is important to realize that almost no teacher complained about load in terms of too many classes or too many students; virtually all disappointments were stated in terms of the teacher's inability to complete his task—to provide individual guidance, to read and return papers, etc.

Any interpretation of these complaints must recognize that 50 percent of the English teachers in these schools have Master's degrees, that most are well educated in English, that 85 percent read the *English Journal*, that those interviewed tend to be the more successful English teachers in the schools visited, and that the average teacher works with a class load of 130 students per day. If such teachers are concerned about the conditions under which English is taught, what must morale be like in other schools where conditions are at best no better and the teachers not so well prepared?

Conditions are far from ideal, then, even in the schools selected for their strong programs in English. But strong teachers have much resiliency. When asked in interviews whether they would have taught English had they known at the beginning of their careers what they know now about the problems, compensations, restrictions, and rewards of the profession, 70 percent indicated that they would still become teachers of English. Only 10 percent answered that they would not, and 20 percent were undecided. Despite problems and disappointments, these carefully selected teachers retain their faith in the profession.

Indeed, paralleling the interview question concerning disappointments, teachers were asked to identify their most significant compensation for teaching English. The analysis of recorded interview responses indicates the strong satisfaction which most teachers find in their relations with students. They are, to be sure, incurable sentimentalists, talking about the "light on student faces," "the mountain-top experience," "helping children live better," "lighting a fire in some students." Perhaps the more interesting result of this interview question was the absence of much concern with subject matter, and particularly the absence of any mention of composition or grammar. But it is noteworthy, too, that these same teachers who expressed such concern with teaching conditions were concerned primarily with student welfare; they want better conditions so that they can teach more effectively, not to make it easier for themselves.

Summary

A study of the conditions under which English is taught in those schools reported to be achieving excellent results in English does not yield conclusive evidence that conditions are distinctly better than in other schools throughout the country. Although the average pupil load is somewhat lower than reported in national studies, the usual assignment remains five classes. Moreover, interviews with teachers reveal extensive concern with details of classroom management, administrative reports, and lack of general interest in English studies on the part of both the administration and the community.

What does appear distinctive in these selected schools is the quality of the teaching staff itself. The superior initial preparation under which more than 80 percent of these teachers of English have majors in the subject is continued through both personal initiative and administrative encouragement. Far more than in the typical secondary school, these teachers join professional associations, read professional magazines, apply for and receive stipends and fellowships to continue their education in English. Indeed the differences are at times so significant that they provide internal evidence to justify selection of the schools and support the contention that, as a group, these schools are representative of better English programs. Although project observers felt that many of the schools' efforts in inservice education needed more conscious direction in terms of specific subject and classroom needs, they were not unmindful of the attempts presently being made. Most clear of all distinctive characteristics of these selected teachers is their basic professional interest in the subject and in the students. As interviews made clear, these teachers feel overtaxed, not overworked. Project observers noted that much time is devoted to routine activities not directly related to the teachers' areas of competence. Were more of these demands assigned to paraprofessionals, clerks, and other teacher aides, the teachers might meet the demands of paper correction, preparation, and professional growth far more successfully than at present.

CHAPTER 4

The English Department and the English Curriculum

Of substantial importance to the success of an English program is the organization of the department as a whole, including the administrative structure, the physical arrangements, and even the subtle relationships among individual personalities. To the project staff, the overall plan for supervising instruction seemed clearly a part of this total structure, as did the preparation and use of printed courses of study and syllabi. Indeed, within a short time after observations began, the staff came to regard the structure of high school departments of English as a variable of such importance that it called two invitational conferences for department chairmen to explore the problems and to advance recommendations designed to strengthen English departments in general. The report of these conferences, ***High School Departments of English: Their Organization, Administration, and Supervision,*** has been made available to the profession through the National Council of Teachers of English.[1] Because of the availability of this report, the discussion here has been somewhat abbreviated; the report on the entire Study would be incomplete, however, without at least a summary of observations concerning this crucial variable.

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[1] James R. Squire, Roger K. Applebee, and Robert J. Lacampagne, *op. cit.* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1965).

Department Organization

That the organization of the department is an important element in the success of an English program was clear to virtually all project observers, who ranked the quality of the department's leadership among the three special strengths of the programs in the National Study. As the discussion in Chapter 2 indicated, many of the other observed strengths, such as the resources available for teaching or the climate of work in the department, seem directly related to the quality of leadership and of overall organization. Of as much moment, however, is the identification of inadequate department leadership as the most frequent weakness cited by observers of these programs. Although one still hears an occasional argument against the department system in the high school, the observations of this project clearly indicate that schools with a considerable degree of organization tend to have superior English programs. And this view is not confined to members of the National Study of High School English Programs. The report of the CEEB Commission on English[2] makes abundantly clear that English departments must learn to exercise considerably more enterprise and autonomy than they have at present; G. Melvin Hipps, writing in *The Clearing House*, pleads for greater responsibility for the department chairman, particularly in the area of supervision;[3] and a recent research report from the American Association of School Administrators indicates that the number of department heads is increasing.[4]

Although project schools vary in the responsibilities assigned to the department chairman—the amount of time he is released from teaching to perform these duties, and the amount of money paid him for administering the department—it may be said that in all of these matters the chairman in the better English program is treated better than is the typical chairman in other schools. As an index of the other variables, the released time provided for supervisory or curricular duties is probably most significant, and as such it is compared in Table 7 with the responses of 241 unselected schools nationally to a questionnaire designed by Charles B. Ruggless for the NCTE. Because the two groups of schools were not matched in other dimensions, the comparison can offer no absolute distinctions, yet the differences are sufficient to confirm the impression of observers that chairmen in Study schools have more responsibility within departments than obtains in the average school nationally.

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[2] Commission on English, *Freedom and Discipline in English* (New York, College Entrance Examination Board, 1965).

[3] G. Melvin Hipps, "Supervision: A Basic Responsibility of the Department Head," *The Clearing House*, XXXIX (April 1965), pp. 487–491.

[4] "Department Heads in Senior High Schools," *ERS Reporter, 1966* (Washington, D.C., American Association of School Administrators, January 1966), p. 2.

Many departments, however, were led after a fashion by chairmen who served only in name, who had no official authority except perhaps to order chalk, pencils, and paper clips; by chairmen who were commissioned to write the curriculum, speak to the PTA, supervise teachers, and take on clearly administrative burdens with neither the compensatory pay nor the time necessary to do the task. Although such problems make clear that not all of the chairmen observed functioned in the same way, certain patterns of organization and professional competence did emerge in the better schools. To describe this role, the project staff pre-

Table 7

Released Periods of Department Chairmen

	Percent of Chairmen:	
	Study Schools (n = 106)	*Schools Nationally* (n = 241)*
Reduced by *1* class	39.1 percent	11 percent
Reduced by *2* classes	29.7 percent	7 percent
Reduced by more than *2* classes	13.3 percent	4 percent
Total with any class reduction	82.1 percent	22 percent

*Data from Charles B. Ruggless, "The Nominal High School English Department Chairman," *English Journal*, LIV:3 (May 1965), 375–378.

pared the following analysis in response to a consensus established by the participating chairmen at the two invitational conferences alluded to above.

> From either a practical or a theoretical point of view, the single most important reason for appointing an English department chairman in the secondary school is to improve instruction. Therefore, considerations of years in service, personal friendship, or immediate convenience should give way to the professional and intellectual competence that the chairman can bring to the many-faceted role that he must play as department leader. On the other hand, he must provide vigorous intellectual leadership pervading the department and other reaches of his school as well. That he must himself be a teacher of stature who is willing to demonstrate his ability as opportunities are available is obvious; but he should also reveal a more than common knowledge of his subject and extend this knowledge by a continuing study of English and of research in the teaching of English. In part, this commitment to his profession can be fostered by continuous activity in professional organizations; in part, it is served by his individual efforts to learn and disseminate the promising ideas to be found in journals, in professional literature, or in other schools. On the other hand, the department chairman is responsible for creating a favorable climate for learning by working with teachers and administrators to give English teachers time to teach. By promoting within the department an atmosphere of mutual respect (tempered, however, with the opportunity for mutual criticism), by encouraging the exchange of ideas, and by guarding against an excess of clerical and administrative impediments, he will hopefully achieve the necessary climate for effective teaching and learning.
>
> Granted then, that the department chairman has the intellectual vigor, the stamina, and the personal qualities to create such an atmosphere, what are his responsibilities and duties? Although many of his functions are difficult to circumscribe precisely, and although the size and organization of each school are unique, it may be helpful to think of his responsibilities in four major areas—understanding that the categories are frequently arbitrary and that the particular responsibilities listed under one may carry over to other categories. These areas are (1) procedural details, (2) supervision, appointment, and evaluation of teachers, (3) curriculum development, and (4) public relations.

1. PROCEDURAL DETAILS

Obviously the first area is related to all of the others and seems, at first, of slight consequence to the chairman's proper function. Yet ability to set procedure and to handle details is essential; only if a chairman can manage the routines of office can he free himself for more important responsibilities. By abdicating a responsibility to draw the departmental budget, he narrows the effectiveness of his teachers by limiting the books and equipment they might have had. By failing to participate in student registration and grouping procedures, he puts fetters on the English curriculum. A resourceful chairman can avoid a complexity of minor problems by working with his teachers to develop guidelines dealing with everything from supplying books and films to establishing criteria for correcting themes. A competent department chairman employs vision, but also procedure in planning meaningful department meetings and curriculum studies.

2. SUPERVISION, APPOINTMENT, AND EVALUATION OF TEACHERS

If a department chairman is to be responsible for the quality of English instruction in his school, he must be involved in the appointment, supervision, and evaluation of English teachers. Although large school districts must use centralized offices and personnel specialists to cope with the plight of too few teachers and too many classrooms, the chairman should still advise in hiring new teachers. At best, he is a party to the recruiting and interviewing of prospective teachers before they are employed. As the one who best knows the needs of his department, he is in a position to recommend the most qualified replacement or addition. Knowing the appointee in advance, he can start orientation long before the opening day of school.

The chairman is likewise in the most favorable position to know the inadequacies of other teachers on the English staff and can therefore counsel them as to the kinds of inservice training which would be most helpful. By the same token, he knows best the unique strengths of his department members and finds ways to make these resources available to others. He struggles, for example, to encourage the creative teacher to experiment with new procedures and new content, without sacrificing instructional goals required for program continuity. He listens carefully to those who have new ideas to present and encourages careful departmental consideration of every new idea, no matter how unpopular it may initially seem. He can recommend to local colleges and universities the kinds of courses that would be especially useful to a group of teachers, or the kinds of workshops or institutes that would benefit an entire department. He can call to the attention of college or district authorities those teachers in the department who have unusual talents which could contribute to workshops or special meetings. As an agent of liaison within the school, the chairman also serves as intermediary among his teachers, the guidance department, and the administration. In this capacity he can, for example, help teachers interpret standardized test scores, win administrative support for a department project, or suggest that a teacher use one of the auxiliary student services in handling a unique problem.

Implicit in this liaison position is the chairman's role in teacher evaluation. Whether such evaluation means dismissal, tenure, or an additional salary increment, the teacher has a right to expect that the person who is most knowledgeable about him, his subject, and the varieties of teaching methods open to him should judge his competence. Although the school principal can judge in part and, in larger districts, the subject matter specialist can judge in part, the department chairman is probably most highly qualified to weigh all parts. However, if the burden of teacher evaluation is to be borne by the chairman, it seems axiomatic that he should have opportunity and authority for classroom visitation—not once or twice, and not capriciously—but to the extent that he can render a professional judgment concerning the effectiveness of a teacher. Such visitation, of course, demands that he be given the necessary time for observing classes and for holding conferences with teachers following each visit. Certainly for new teachers the visit and the conference supply the best possible method for inservice education and the consequent improvement of teacher effectiveness. The chairman's intimate knowledge of each teacher's strengths, of course, enables the chairman to write the overall English schedule, deploying each teacher to the grade levels and ability groups where he can be most successful. It also assists him in advising teachers about instructional matters or in supporting those creative teachers who seek to experiment with new approaches or new content.

In working with teachers in his department, the chairman has one special obligation to the future of English teaching, the responsibility of identifying, encouraging, and educating one or two vigorous, creative young teachers who may someday serve as English chairmen on their own. Indeed given the present turnover on many school faculties and the rate at which new schools are being constructed, each chairman may seriously accept the obligation to be preparing at all times at least two potential chairmen, one for his own school and one for some newly created department elsewhere.

3. CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Any effort towards improving the curriculum or developing a new course of study rests on the assumption that the subject content or sequence might be changed. It is obvious then that a chairman's primary responsibility in the area of curriculum is the continuing assessment of its strengths and weaknesses. Such an evaluation suggests that he know what happens, not only during the three or four years of high school English, but in the years before and after—in the English programs of contributing elementary and junior high schools and in those local colleges and universities where the majority of college bound students will go. An understanding of these programs and a knowledge of new developments in subject matter and method allow the chairman, in association with his fellow teachers, to make intelligent decisions concerning curriculum change. For the most part, he asserts an oblique influence on curriculum by working with fellow teachers in selecting books, in preparing suggestive guides for teaching particular works of literature, in outlining special approaches to teaching language or composition. Large-scale or districtwide curriculum renovation would clearly demand not only his talent and the contribution of many teachers, but the unique knowledge and authority of the district supervisor and the assistance of the college specialist as well.

Besides providing a means of articulation between the high school, the college, and the elementary school English programs, the English department chairman must work closely with chairmen of other subject areas to avoid the problems of repetition or conflicting instruction and to promote a healthy reinforcement and extension of ideas and skills.

4. PUBLIC RELATIONS

One avenue of school and college articulation already present in many secondary schools is the practice of using high school classes as a training ground for future teachers. A capable chair-

> man accepts the responsibility of placing these interns with helpful and competent teachers, and he also cooperates with the college instructors in evaluation. There are many bonuses: promising candidates may be singled out as future staff members; lines of communication between the school and the college stay open; fresh viewpoints are obtained; good relationships with the local college are enhanced.
>
> A decidedly important function of the English chairman is in this very area of public relations—or more specifically, public attitudes toward English and English teaching. An open door policy is not enough. To dispel the common public notion that English is nothing more than an accumulation of rules regarding spelling and verbal niceties, the department chairman should interpret the program to administrators, parents, and the public at large. Resolute and intelligent interpretation raises the public image of the teaching of English and provides a sympathetic background for improvement of the profession.

But the effective organization of a department depends on more than a single person. Not every department, moreover, would function at its best under the conditions described above, necessarily a somewhat idealized view reflecting the apparent needs of the relatively large public school. Smaller schools, and to a large extent independent schools, would probably find the effects of formal efficiency and authority quite unnecessary.

One aspect of department organization that is often overlooked or underestimated is the physical matter of space for the department center or office. Practices differed a great deal and were obviously affected by financial considerations, but it can be stated unequivocally that the most farsighted departments and the best programs supported some kind of department center or office which served as a nucleus for the whole. Observers felt that the less successful pattern was that of the department office, generally small and housing little more than the chairman himself. Much more successful were the rooms outfitted with enough desks and materials to accommodate many of the department's teachers at once—a space where they could either relax or work, or, what is more common, a place where they could discuss mutual problems and tentative solutions.[5] Although there was no good index to be found for the frequency and the quality of professional conversation in any given school, it seemed clear to the project staff that the department center encourages professional discourse; the pigeon-hole dispersion of teachers around the building, each one expected to oversee an assigned area, creates professional isolation and stagnation.

Even the most able chairmen working under optimum conditions with appropriate released time, clerical help, and good physical facilities were made more efficient and helpful by delegating certain responsibilities to other members of the department. Thus, some had grade-level chairmen who functioned with varying degrees of autonomy; others depended on *ad hoc* committees to prepare curricular materials or to design year-end tests. In a few of the largest departments, subchairmen were named and given particular responsibilities with released time to carry them out.

Selection of Teachers

The adoption of tenure regulations, while leading, on the one hand, to a number of improvements in general teaching conditions, makes imperative, on the other, a careful initial screening of teachers. A school must provide the means for choosing teachers with a high degree of subject matter and methodological competence who will complement the existing department. In recognition of the importance of a viable system, the present Study surveyed procedures in the participating schools and attempted to assess the degree to which the department chairman was involved in choosing the personnel for whose work he would ultimately be held responsible.

Most of the schools in the National Study are part of multiple school systems with central offices which often play a major role in recruiting, interviewing, and selecting teachers. Indeed, the selection process left seventeen of the schools without any firsthand knowledge whatsoever of the people with whom they would have to work, and thus with no direct means of controlling the composition of their faculties. Of the chairmen interviewed, 57 percent indicated that while there might be some theoretical mechanism for influencing the administrative decision, they themselves had no practical effect on the final decision to hire. Such procedures are often justified on the basis either of lower costs through centralization or of ensuring that no one especially attractive school in a large district can monopolize the better qualified of the prospective teachers. Yet to assume that anyone but a department chairman familiar with the particular needs and personality of his own department can successfully select individuals to fill vacancies as they arise is to assume greater standardization in teaching than exists anywhere in the country.

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[5] See discussion in Chapter 11 of one department center in a large-city high school.

Observers visiting schools in large multiple school districts frequently noted a feeling of impotence among department chairmen faced with central control of elements vital to the excellence of their programs. Whenever this feeling was encountered, it was accompanied by virtually absolute central control of teacher selection and generally ineffective instruction. Yet these are characteristics not inherent in large systems, for in some the department chairmen were formally and effectively involved in all stages of teacher selection. Frequently they were required to detail the requirements of their department, extending sometimes even to a request for a teacher experienced in a particular method. Often membership on the recruiting team rotated among principals and in a few cases among department chairmen. Finally, before teachers were assigned to a school from the central pool, they were interviewed and rated by both principals and chairmen.

Even when no formal system for the delegation of this authority existed, the strongest administrators found ways to accomplish the same ends. More than one principal in large districts reported that he simply ignored the accepted routines for obtaining new teachers, manipulating procedures in the central office so that the teachers he recruited would be hired and assigned to his school. Some chairmen, too, have acquired such respect within their district that they are able to obtain superior teachers out of all proportion to the quality of the available teacher pool. The effectiveness of such chairmen in recruiting and retaining teachers accounts in large measure for the excellence of their faculties.

A study of these schools has convinced the project staff that the involvement of the principal and more especially the department chairman in the final selection of teachers is essential to the establishment of a superior English department. The complex modern English curriculum requires specialized knowledge and skills; not every English teacher is effective in large group lectures, nor is every teacher comfortable in teaching reading or in directing the work of slow learners. Teaching teams have disintegrated when a teacher with needed skills cannot be found within the school; electives have had to be cancelled because no system existed for indicating the specialization needed in a replacement teacher; excellent English programs have deteriorated because a core of excellent teachers had moved on and been replaced by mediocre teachers from the central pool. Such cases proliferate when there is no effective procedure within the school for influencing decisions on the selection of teachers.

Supervision of Instruction

Related to department organization and hiring procedures is the problem of supervision of the classroom teacher and of the English program as a whole. While it is clear that much cogent supervision is accomplished very indirectly, it is also clear that few schools in the Study maintain rigorous policies of direct supervision and evaluation of their English programs. When the principals and the English chairmen of the 116 basic high schools were asked to describe the structure for supervision in English, less than a fourth of the chairmen and only twelve principals indicated that they did *not* think supervision was part of their job; yet in only eight schools did both indicate they actually supervise the instructional program and visit colleagues' classes. In thirty-two of these schools no one within the school, nor anyone from the country or city office, supervises instruction on a regular basis.

In the eighty-four schools which have organized programs of supervision, practice varies considerably. Twenty-four department chairmen visit classes; twenty hold conferences with teachers, usually after classroom observation; only eleven attempt to evaluate teachers' method. Fourteen other chairmen discuss possible methods either in department meetings or during individual teacher conferences. Of the principals, six indicated they handle supervision almost exclusively through department chairmen meetings; four said they used meetings with teachers as a supervisory tool; only three said they held curriculum discussions. Significantly, no one—principal or department chairman—mentioned the use of common final examinations as a supervisory and evaluative tool.

In some instances, chairmen were required not only to visit classes and hold conferences with their teachers, but also to file written reports with the principal. Practice varied a good deal concerning the teachers who were to be visited—in some cases tenured teachers were exempted; in others they were not. Very rarely were teachers in a department asked to turn in lesson plans to a department chairman, or to anyone else, although they were nearly always expected to keep these plans in some detail so that, among other things, they would be available for a substitute teacher. It is safe to say that in almost half of the schools there is literally no direct supervision of the English program, by principals, department chairmen, or supervisors. Formal, rigorous programs for the supervision and evaluation of instruction simply do not exist in any but a handful of schools. Almost without exception, considerable improvement is possible.

How such improvements may be effected can be seen in the practices of two schools observed to have supervisory programs outstanding in certain respects, although neither program should be considered adequate in itself. In one, coordination resulted largely from final examinations constructed at the departmental level after meetings with teachers to review content and areas of emphasis at each grade level. Each test was scored by at least three members of the department, including the teacher from whose class the test was taken, adding a measure of impartiality to final grades. The departmental discussion served as a review of purposes and goals, while the results at each grade level provided a useful estimate of the degree to which these objectives were being met by both the individual teacher and the department as a whole. Virtually all teachers seemed to benefit from this interchange on what and how to teach.

In the other school, evaluation and supervision were based primarily on classroom observation. The department chairman observed every teacher on a regular schedule, preparing a written critique covering predetermined areas as the basis for individual conferences on the ends and means of teaching English. Quite often on the evidence of his observations the chairman referred teachers to outside sources, such as the district supervisor or the central professional library, for assistance with specific teaching problems.

Many chairmen, regrettably, overlook the potential of such practices, failing to realize how easily most could be developed out of present procedures. Almost all high school English programs contain, for example, some kind of comprehensive final examination, an examination which, to the extent that it measures students' progress toward the objectives of the program, is also a statement about the success of the individual teacher and of the department as a whole. Yet these remain uninspected and uncriticized in nearly all schools. Again, the plans which many departments require teachers to submit on some regular basis, if only to assist a possible substitute teacher, could provide an invaluable insight into content and procedures of many classes if the chairman were to institute even an occasional review. Department meetings, too, can be devoted to exploring areas of weakness common to a large segment of the department and can become the center of curriculum development and change. Perhaps the most effective—but also most expensive—approach to supervision is classroom observation. When a trained chairman or supervisor is willing to analyze and discuss in detail at regular intervals the strengths of his teachers in their classrooms, he can generate a sustained improvement in the quality of the entire English program. At present, classroom observation is used neither widely nor well as a method of supervision, but it remains a potentially powerful supervisory tool.

Most programs of poor quality visited by project observers offered no supervision at all. In such programs, lack of consensus and leadership seemed to combine to produce fragmentation and duplication of effort, conflicting philosophies and practices, slavish textbook teaching, or freewheeling methods of questionable content. Such conditions cry out for knowledgeable and forceful supervision. In the opinion of the project staff, many schools could improve their English programs by the simple expedient of delegating more authority and more responsibility to their respective departments and department chairmen.

Courses of Study and Program Design

An examination of the printed curriculum guides or courses of study from the schools observed would, on the one hand, show what these schools say they are doing in English and, on the other, provide a basis of comparison with other studies based entirely on extrinsic course materials, notably the 1958 report from the U.S. Office of Education.[6] The original 116 high schools were therefore asked to send whatever they could in the way of curriculum guides, courses of study, study guides, or other materials that would reflect their various courses in English. Eighty-five responded with enough such materials to enable the project staff to read and analyze them meaningfully. Although a few carried dates of 1950 or 1953, the majority were written or at least revised in the late 1950's or early 1960's. The assembled guides reveal considerable variety in length, in kind, in "voice," and in the audience assumed by the curriculum makers. At one extreme can be found mere topical outlines of the work expected at certain grade levels, some of them little more than textbook tables of contents;[7] at the other are lengthy, comprehensive courses of study detailing activities and questions for an entire four-year sequence.

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[6] Arno Jewett, *English Language Arts in American High Schools*, Bulletin 1958, No. 13 (Washington, D.C., United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 1958).

No doubt the diversity of schools represented in the project sample helps to account for the great range in the type of guide produced. One would expect that a multiple school district would have courses of study developed for all of its schools and, by the same token, that autonomous schools would produce their own materials, perhaps to augment a state syllabus. Of the eighty-five courses of study sent to the project office or given to observers during their visits, fifty-three were apparently developed in individual schools, twenty-nine were produced for more widespread use by the city or county school district, and three, all from less populous regions of the West or South, were prepared by the state. That many more than three of the states represented in the Study have prepared guides and materials[8] would seem to indicate that the curriculum in English is considered to be essentially a local matter by those in the schools, a responsibility or privilege of individual schools and districts rather than a mandate on the state. It is true, however, that some of the school or district guides did allude to state syllabi or state curriculum bulletins in the context of their own materials.

Other quantifiable data from the collection of curriculum guides deal with the uses to which they are presumably put and the proportion of their contents devoted to particular skills and components of English. While some of the guides reflected different approaches for different grade levels or ability groups, of the forty-six concerned primarily with literature, twenty-one were developed by genre, thirteen by theme, and twelve by chronology. These findings, roughly parallel to those of the

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[7] Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that this extreme is represented by those schools that do not have any written course of study.

[8] Arno Jewett, *op. cit.* Appendix B lists twenty-one states having state curriculum guides in 1958. Certainly the number would be somewhat higher in 1963–1965.

Jewett report on 285 courses of study from as broad a geographical range,[9] are also borne out by reports of department chairmen and project observers. Apparently what was cited in the Jewett report as the beginning of a modest trend toward the development of thematic units in place of traditional organization did not develop as such in the schools composing this sample.

Nonetheless, a significant number of the guides contained teaching units of one kind or another. Some were highly specific units on speech or business letters while others had such diverse titles as: Product of Our Pioneer Spirit, We Hold These Truths, Fun with Poetry, *The Return of the Native,* "Ozymandias," or *Macbeth.* It seems to be true that whereas a *unit* in the thirties or forties meant no specific literature, but perhaps a complex of ideas somehow related to one unifying concept, it has come increasingly to be based either on certain skills or on a particular piece of literature to which others may be related. Beyond these unit-oriented materials, sixteen courses of study included detailed study guides for particular works of literature without reference to broader units. The discussion in the next chapter will make clear, however, that these materials reflect more the contemporary concern with close reading of literary texts than the active emphasis observed in the classroom. But perhaps one function of such printed course designs is to direct attention to what *should* be.

While there was much evidence within the guides of attention to grammar, usage, spelling, and other writing mechanics, no careful quantitative analysis was made. Generally speaking, as much as half of the material in the guides appeared to be directed toward such matters; again, this is a much higher percentage than was reflected in observed classroom teaching.

Only about one fourth of the schools that forwarded materials to the project office felt it necessary to treat the teaching of composition in a special section of their curriculum guides. On the other hand, there was concern for the *product* of composition as evidenced by the number of evaluation charts, samples of student writing, lists of "fatal errors," and tables of correction symbols. Only three of the guides explicitly divided the English course on a semester basis—one semester for grammar and composition and the other for literature. In practice, moreover, only one such division was found by observers, and this in a southern school located in a small town sufficiently removed from major urban or university centers that the teachers seemed out of contact with current professional dialogue. Apparently what was once a fairly common basis for the organization of the English program has now passed on in favor of the fused approach.

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[9] Arno Jewett, *op. cit.,* p. 65.

Almost as many of the printed curriculum guides were based on the quadruped schema of speaking, writing, reading, and listening as on any other rationale. One school system, not to leave out anything, found a five-point basis in the above four skill areas—plus literature! It is difficult to draw generalizations from the many outines and courses of study reviewed, but it does seem that the more enlightened guides concentrate less on making precise connections to some pat system or philosophy and more on presenting the subject matter of English as a broadly based, humanistic study of language, literature, and composition. To be sure, a rationale for teaching English is altogether necessary, but in the opinion of the investigators much of the philosophy expressed in the various forewords and introductions might well be grounded in more pragmatic terms.[10]

Less than half of the materials received reflected any sort of grouping or tracking among schools in the sample, although reports of observers indicated that some 86 percent have formal grouping procedures which apply to the student profile in English classes. Grouping in all schools tends to be vocational (college preparatory, commercial, distributive education, general). More often than not it is based on composite aptitude or achievement scores rather than competence in a specific area; teachers are rarely involved in the placement process. While it is apparent that different methods of grouping have been widely accepted in

[10] As a clear case in point—i.e., finding high-sounding phrases to justify the writing of such a document—the investigators offer the following bit of trivia from one of the guides: "We recommend that 10th grade teachers encourage daily a love of all reading."

the better high schools in the country, the effect, if not the intent, has been to provide a special learning climate only for the above-average student who is planning on a college education.[11] Few English departments or curriculum committees have attempted to construct viable programs for all levels; even in the area of reading deficiency, which has received so much attention in recent years, there has been little progress beyond the formal designation of a remedial reading section and the acquisition of pacing devices and canned programs. Indeed, of the eighty-five courses of study, only eighteen have clearly delineated programs for even two groups of students.

The vocational nomenclature typical of most of these systems is perhaps symptomatic of the problems faced by the schools; this concept of division certainly contradicts the use of comprehensive aptitude and achievement batteries. If, on the other hand, grouping does reflect the use of such tests and is justified on the basis of specific deficiencies in the capacity to learn by standard methods and materials, this rationale is being hidden behind a semantic screen. Certainly there is little evidence in the curriculum guides or in the English programs observed of attention to the kinds of groupings needed or the special emphasis in instruction which each should receive in the high school today, and there is little more than token recognition of the last twenty years of research on mental abilities and individual differences. The principal who said, "We don't know what we are doing here," revealed more than he knew.

One should not leave the subject of curriculum building—or the writing of curricular materials—without noting the extreme variability in the quality of the writing itself. After reading through most of eighty-five courses of study, one gets the impression that there are some teachers, department chairmen, or curriculum coordinators who should leave the task in more competent hands. Perhaps the most egregious examples are the natural and unfortunate result of committee work—thus the amorphous tone and the fragmented nature of the guide. As a precaution against this committee flavor, it might be well for departments to commission one member to do the actual writing of the document after the department as a whole has determined its content. The staff of the National Study is in agreement with the Commission on English of the College Entrance Examination Board in its view that the responsibility for creating a "curriculum by consensus" resides only *within* the department.[12]

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[11] The repeated finding that the schools in this Study are doing far less for noncollege than for college bound students may partially be a reflection of the basis for selecting schools. However, investigators believe that the weaknesses seen in most schools visited reflect even more a fundamental, almost shocking neglect in American education today. Comments on this finding appear throughout the report, but especially in Chapters 2, 5, and 10.

Anyone reading a sizable number of curriculum guides will be hard pressed to determine who the intended audience might be. At times (as in the example in footnote 10), they seem directed toward the teachers themselves, apparently the very authors of the guide. At others, they are intended for new teachers, visitors, or students; the majority try to strike some amorphous middle ground that really satisfies no one. Certainly one of the most pressing reasons for preparing a course of study is to acquaint beginning teachers or teachers new to the school with the whole perspective of the English program. Yet it is a forbidding task to read through hundreds of pages and sometimes many volumes of curricular materials, and few teachers ever do.[13]

Summary

It is clear to the investigators that curriculum efforts divorced from the classroom and the students, however well intentioned and ably led, are of no great consequence to the process of teaching. New ideas, scholarly opinion, and classroom expertise are all necessary in developing wholesale curriculum ventures, but the rewards of such time-consuming and expensive projects must be found in the doing; the observers are of the opinion that beneficial results of such projects do not carry over into the classroom *unless the teachers themselves* have molded and shaped the final document.

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[12] Commission on English, *op. cit.*

[13] In one school system which evidently takes great pride in its quantities of curricular materials, observers found that teachers not only did not comply with the courses as written, but they actively resented them because they were written by a committee of a different professional persuasion from another school.

Both as a practical matter and as a philosophical position, the investigators feel that the "evolving curriculum by consensus" as cited by the Commission on English is a very sound one.[14] In the small number of schools where such a practice is a continuing tradition, all teachers feel free to develop materials and share them with their colleagues to use, ignore, or modify. Thus a professional dialogue continues unbroken, and the level of instruction and learning advances. If the organization of the department allows enlightened leadership, if a program of supervision provides teachers with needed help and support, then ways can be found within the school to develop a design for the English program which can positively affect classroom teaching.

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[14] Commission on English, *op. cit.*

CHAPTER 5

The Teaching of Literature

The programs for the teaching of literature which were found in the schools of the National Study were more extensive, more carefully organized, and more effective than any other aspect of English instruction. Observers found not only that 52.2 percent of class time emphasizes literary studies, but also that considerably more attention is devoted to concepts important to literature than to those identified with language, rhetoric, or composition. Probably in large measure as a direct result of the dominance which these programs had in the classroom, they ranked high among the general strengths cited by observers, teachers, and students.

This is not to say, however, that the programs observed were universally excellent, that students and teachers do not have their complaints, or that project observers were completely satisfied with the quality of instruction. In spite of the high ranking of such programs in comparison with other aspects of English, only 33 of 218 observer reports cited the teaching of literature as outstanding. Here as elsewhere in the English program it was often the individual teacher rather than the school as a whole that was singled out for distinction; not infrequently the superb and the mundane were found side by side.

This observed commitment to literary studies conflicts sharply with the frequently voiced concern of some college critics that school programs are so "skill centered" that English has become merely a "tool" which neglects the careful study and analysis of literature. Quite possibly, however, an emphasis on literature may be a characteristic unique to outstanding English programs.

The Purpose and Organization of Literary Study

Despite their obvious commitment to literature, teachers of English seem to have reached no clear consensus about the objectives of the program. Observers reported individual teachers who clearly understood whether they were teaching literature as human experience, as imaginative illumination, as recorded spiritual history, or even as moral or aesthetic value, but there were few departments with such a consistent outlook. Of greater concern than the dominance of a single point of view—a dominance not infrequently questioned—was the commitment to purpose inherent in programs with an explicit philosophy, the recognition by a faculty as a whole that literature contributes essentially to the education of each student. "Every teacher seems to believe," wrote one observer, "and to teach as though he believed, in the necessity of teaching communication and literary analysis, the meat and potatoes of literary study. . . . I have been in five schools now, and this is the first one in which I felt that the approaches to literature in the classroom were really in line with modern textual analysis and modern critical approaches." This conviction of the importance of literature, which seems to be the significant corollary of clear purpose, is too often lacking in English departments.

Students' development through literature was ranked as the primary objective of literary study by 62 out of the 102 department chairmen reporting, second by 23 more. The ability to comprehend the meaning and development of a given work was next in importance among their responses but was ranked first only 24 times. Other objectives dealing with literary tradition, with literature as art, and with students' aesthetic response were seldom approved. As observers indicated in their summaries of visits, the programs in Study schools tend to emphasize the ideas in literature more than do average school programs; indeed, emphasis on such instruction is equaled only by the concern with literary history. Few classes concentrating on the ethics and morality or the social documentation in a given work of literature were encountered during the course of the Study.

A healthy variety in the approaches seems to be used in the classroom to attain these objectives. Reports from department chairmen on approaches to the teaching of literature in each of the high school grades revealed no dominant trends; indeed, aside from a sharp increase in the importance of chronology reflecting eleventh and twelfth grade surveys of American and English literature, programs seem rather eclectic. Teachers, too, considered a wide variety of approaches to be of significant value; all of those which they were asked to evaluate seemed of some importance to at least 60 percent; the majority were approved by over 85 percent. Nonetheless, emphasis on ideas in single works, on genre, on close textual study, and on guided individual reading were clearly rated of more importance than the other approaches. Curiously, thematic emphasis was considered of great value by only a third of the teachers, although two thirds gave such support to the study of ideas. Some 40 percent of the teachers agreed on another questionnaire with the statement "A literature program in which selections are grouped around topics or themes offers the best approach to developing permanent appreciation." Another 35 percent were uncertain. Thus teachers appeared somewhat ambivalent in their attitudes. A similar uncertainty was evident in their responses toward literary history, which only one quarter of the teachers rated of great importance but which over 60 percent supported when phrased thus: "Students need to study the history of literature so that they may better understand the current trends in literature." Another 20 percent were undecided.

Observers found, however, that the depth and quality of each class's experience with literature is of more importance than any pattern of organization and emphasis. One observer reported advanced students closely involved in a thematic study of alienation and the search for identity in such works as Conrad's *The*

Secret Sharer, Graham Greene's *A Burnt-Out Case*, and selections from Kafka, Dostoyevsky, and even Bertolt Brecht. Another was excited by the study of tragedy through *Oedipus Rex*, *Macbeth*, *Jude the Obscure*, and *J.B.* Even a chronological unit on "Theological Backgrounds of American Literature" seemed to one observer to possess real merit. Such moments of impact are possible within any overall pattern of organization, though evasion of literary study, of contact with individual texts, of direct experience in literature was observed more frequently in classes oriented deliberately around historical or biographical matters.

Few new sequential patterns for organizing literary study were uncovered. The patterns familiar to most American teachers were common in these schools—thematic or typological study in grades nine and ten, American literature in grade eleven, English literature or world literature in grade twelve. Variations on this pattern saw some schools moving world literature to grade ten, or perhaps American to that level followed by a year of British and finally of world literature, but such tamperings with familiar categories and sequences had not resulted in demonstrably more effective programs. The study of American literature seems likely to continue almost everywhere at the junior level, albeit with somewhat more emphasis on twentieth-century writers.

What radical changes are occurring in these schools are found primarily at the senior level, where observers found several elective courses open to students: English literature, modern literature, world literature, humanities, sometimes even special courses in Shakespeare and the drama, in the novel, or in great books. Advanced courses oriented around the individual text and close analytical study are being introduced in a few locations and not infrequently provided the context for some of the most exciting teaching noted by project observers. When taught by an instructor skilled in techniques of class discussion and Socratic questioning, such courses can lead students to some of their most satisfying experiences with literature. Conversely, courses which are conceived on historical or cultural bases, or courses primarily concerned with themes and ideas or biographical material, even courses which are concerned with literary genres or modes, appear sometimes to pursue ideas and understandings *about* literature, rather than the experience of literature itself. Reports from classroom observation make clear that exciting teaching of literature, although possible within any one of these frameworks, occurs more frequently when classes are organized so that the study of the emotional, intellectual, and artistic demands of the text remain central.

World literature poses a problem. The sampling of literary selections characteristic of many geographically oriented programs—a brief exposure to Nordic myth, Japanese haiku, Confucianism, excerpts from the *Bhagavad-Gita,* a Russian short story or a French essay—offer a potpourri which can be as much criticized for neglect of literary values as traditional courses in the history of English literature have been. However, some of the better humanities programs offer hope for improvement: a Greek play is studied as part of an extensive interdisciplinary concern with classic thought; *Tristan and Iseult,* and perhaps even some of Chaucer's tales, might represent literature of the medieval period. Less often wedded to the coverage of all periods or countries, such courses at their best provide concentrated attention on important contributions in literature, art, and music during particular epochs. Although often criticized by observers for attempting to cover too much too rapidly, they nevertheless often provide at least some carefully guided study of complete individual texts.[1]

In all such programs, as in the more traditional offerings in world literature, the selection of literature in translation poses a special problem. Modern paperback publishing has made available many major works in translations that perhaps should long since have been forgotten, but teachers of English have at present few resources to help evaluate a given text. Especially because some publishers seek the most inexpensive translations available, many nineteenth and early twentieth-century texts now in the public domain are being used in the schools. Although certain of these earlier translations are worthwhile, others almost seem to stand between the contemporary reader and the original work. The question of how much literature in translation to introduce is another which the profession has yet to resolve. Many, including the directors of this project, believe that our fundamental duty is less to coverage of any particular body of literature than to teaching young people what literature is and how to read it. Powerful national groups such as the English advisory committee of the National Catholic Educational Association have taken a stand against any courses on literature in translation;[2] the Commission on English urges caution.[3] Still the fact remains that few American students, even in college, are sufficiently fluent in another language to read mature literary selections with the ease required for literary experience; an even smaller number are fluent in more than one foreign language. Without some introduction of literature in translation, most Americans will thus be denied the aesthetic and intellectual pleasures inherent in the works of such authors as Cervantes, Boccaccio, Montaigne, Voltaire, Ibsen, Chekhov, Dostoyevsky, Goethe, and Schiller, to mention but a few. The issue seems to be not whether such literature should be included in the program, but how and when; and the further challenge which the profession has yet to meet is that of providing classroom teachers and school librarians with help in selecting adequate translations.[4]

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[1] For further comment on humanities programs, see the discussion of experimental programs in Chapter 12.

Except in the case of advanced twelfth grade courses devoted almost exclusively to literary study, the teaching of literature, however central, is integrally related to all the other aspects

[2] Report of English Advisory Committee, *Proceedings of Annual Convention* (Washington, D.C., National Catholic Educational Association, 1964).

[3] Commission on English, *Freedom and Discipline in English* (New York, College Entrance Examination Board, 1965), pp. 48–49.

[4] Fortunately a first attempt is being made by the National Council of Teachers of English, which during 1966 published a *Teacher's Guide to World Literature for the High School*, edited by Robert O'Neal. For much of the past two decades, Charlton Laird, assisted by numerous scholars, has been preparing a compendious encyclopedia of literature in translation which ultimately will provide teachers with a major resource tool.

of the English program. Teachers do not always achieve the desired integration of all components of English, but they seldom attempt to teach these components separately. Of clear exception are a few experimental programs, especially those with modular scheduling, which separate periods of literary study from those in which other English content is taught. These innovations are discussed more fully in Chapter 12.

Selection of Literary Material

The quality of the literature taught to college bound students is generally as commendable as the selections used with general students and slow learners are questionable. To summarize briefly, in programs cited for outstanding teaching of literature, books were plentifully available, anthologies were supplemented by sets of longer works, seminar discussion was enhanced by the use of group sets, and classroom book collections were much in evidence.

The literature anthology continues to be widely used, but it is introduced largely to provide a common core of readings and is supplemented by other texts. Thus, among frequently observed practices the use of anthologies ranked first, multiple sets of books fourth, and classroom book collections eighth. Indeed, the availability of many texts is clearly a distinguishing characteristic of outstanding programs for teaching literature. The following report, if not typical of the majority of schools, is a good description of the better:

> The school library has 40,000 to 50,000 volumes. It is centrally located, and there are reading rooms that are really comfortable and quiet. More important, each classroom has perhaps two or three hundred books and reference works available to students who wish to take them, and innumerable sets (i.e., twelve to fifteen copies) of books are available to teachers on a moment's notice. If a teacher decides to use a particular poem, for example, he has only to pick up twelve copies of the *Oxford Anthology*, or whatever, from the department room, take them to class, and provide every student with a text for that class session. Other books are

> available through an excellent bookstore right on the edge of the campus not 100 yards from the instructional building, and students may be required to buy whatever paperbacks the instructor sees fit to order.

Recognition of the significance of an ample supply of supplementary books and individual titles led two conferences of high school department chairmen to recommend libraries of 500 appropriate titles in every English classroom.[5]

The increasing availability of paperback books clearly provides teachers in successful literature programs with an adequate supply of texts at reasonable cost. Project observers, especially those from colleges, were quick to note the substantial benefits that accrue when students can purchase their own texts: "The use of paperbound books . . . permits students to mark in their texts, as they absolutely must do for any kind of stylistic analysis or close reading. I saw one class which noted all the imagery in a chapter of *The Red Badge of Courage*, and the discussion was better than anything I have seen anywhere else." It was clear that whenever teachers ignored such resources and relied excessively on the anthologies, called by one observer "thin, undernourished, oversimplified, and frequently puerile," the teaching of literature suffered.

The schools in the National Study varied considerably in the titles taught to all students. Only two works, *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar*, were required of college preparatory classes in more than half of the schools; *Hamlet, Silas Marner, The Scarlet Letter, A Tale of Two Cities*, and *The Return of the Native* were required in at least 40 percent; and *Huckleberry Finn, The Red Badge of Courage, Moby Dick*, and *Our Town* were required in over one fourth of the schools. In this respect findings do not differ substantially from those of Anderson[6] two years before, although the quality of the selections may be somewhat better than those noted in the earlier random survey of the nation's schools. The schools in the Study appear in general, too, to be slightly less prescriptive than schools nationally; and they seem to have been at least a bit more responsive to the virtually unanimous recommendations of scholars and teaching specialists that *Silas Marner*—required in over three quarters of the schools nationally—be dropped in favor of better literature.[7]

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[5] James R. Squire, Roger K. Applebee, Robert J. Lacampagne, *High School Departments of English: Their Organization, Administration, and Supervision* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1965), p. 13.

[6] Scarvia Anderson, *Between the Grimms and the Group: Literature in American High Schools* (Princeton, N.J., Educational Testing Service, 1964).

Recognizing the importance of a positive response to literature if interest and enthusiasm are to be sustained in the classroom, the project staff asked advanced twelfth grade students to list significant authors or works which they had read in or out of school and to list titles which they would like to see added to the English program. The summary of their responses, given in Table 8, makes two points obvious: (1) students by and large judge contemporary works as most significant, and (2) they do not find significant many of those works required of all college preparatory classes. Surely no teacher should accept unequivocally the reading preferences of students and not all great literature elicits an immediately favorable response from readers, but even so most programs seem to have failed to strike a reasonable balance between student preference and teacher prescription. One must question the perpetuation of certain titles in the literary canon of the high school—titles which elicit a favorable response from only an insignificant number of students—when there are so many other great works that could be taught!

Shakespeare was listed by these students as the most significant author they had read, an especially interesting choice in view of the fact that *Macbeth*, *Julius Caesar*, and *Hamlet* are the three works most frequently required in these schools. Yet it is startling to note that of the eleven titles found most significant by these students only twenty-five schools require any one for college preparatory classes. *The Grapes of Wrath*, for example, is fourth on the list of significant books, Steinbeck second only to Shakespeare among significant authors, yet neither this nor any other of his books is required in more than a few schools. It is thus not surprising to find that, even while acknowledging the value of their programs in literature, students recommend changes more frequently for this than for any other aspect of English instruction except the teaching of composition. Inevitably, they called for the inclusion of more contemporary works, books like those suggested on their questionnaires and reported in Table 8.

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[7] More complete results on this and other aspects of reading in the schools are included in Appendix D.

That teachers are definitely aware of this problem was indicated by responses during group interviews to a question on the need to achieve a balance between contemporary and standard selections in the literature program. Time and again faculties split, one third advocating more contemporary materials, an equally large group defending traditional selections, and at least some maintaining that a satisfactory balance had already been achieved. With few exceptions, the decisions concerning inclusion and exclusion approach a crisis with three titles—*Lord of the Flies, The Catcher in the Rye,* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*—titles with unique appeal to adolescents but with elements some teachers and parents find objectionable. The exaggerated concern with these titles, however understandable, too often clouds the real issue, the issue not of failing to teach two or three specific titles, but of the deliberate de-emphasis of major twentieth century American fiction. Schools reluctant to place controversial titles on formal lists of required books seem to be throwing the responsibility on to the individual teacher (for interviews and classroom observation did suggest that these books are taught more frequently than required lists would indicate), and one must ask what great virtue there is in such timidity.

If most schools have not structured a commendable program for teaching contemporary literature, the quality of the reading presented to advanced, honors, and upper track students —the "upper 50 percent"—was generally praised. Unfortunately, the majority of these schools are engaged in a two-track, three-track, five-track, or—in one case—an eleven-track system of instruction in English, and comparable literary content in pro-

Table 8

Significant Reading Experiences of Advanced Twelfth Grade Students

(n = 2,317)

Authors Reported by Students as Most Significant	*No. Students Reporting*	*Titles Reported by Students as Most Significant*	*No. Students Reporting*	*No. Schools Requiring Title*
William Shakespeare	101	Lord of the Flies	96	2
John Steinbeck	92	Catcher in the Rye	66	1
Ernest Hemingway	50	To Kill a Mockingbird	34	4
Charles Dickens	20	1984	33	3
Thomas Hardy	18	The Bible	30	0
William Faulkner	17	Crime and Punishment	27	9
Sinclair Lewis	15	Gone with the Wind	27	0
Mark Twain	15	The Robe	27	0
Fëdor Dostoyevsky	14	Black Like Me	25	0
Pearl S. Buck	11	Cry, the Beloved Country	25	4
Joseph Conrad	11	Of Human Bondage	25	2
Edgar Allan Poe	11	The Scarlet Letter	24	47
Ralph Waldo Emerson	10	Exodus	23	0
Robert Frost	9	The Ugly American	23	1
J. D. Salinger	9	War and Peace	23	0
Albert Camus	8	Grapes of Wrath	20	1
Thomas Costain	8	Return of the Native	19	40
Somerset Maugham	8	Brave New World	18	5
George Bernard Shaw	8	All Quiet on the Western Front	17	0
Thomas Wolfe	8	Les Misérables	17	4

Titles Students Suggest Be Added to English Curriculum	*No. Students Reporting*	*Titles Students Suggest Be Added to English Curriculum*	*No. Students Reporting*
Lord of the Flies	81	War and Peace	23
Crime and Punishment	69	Wuthering Heights	23
The Catcher in the Rye	45	Why We Can't Wait	23
The Grapes of Wrath	29	Walden	23
Brave New World	26	Utopia	21
You Can't Go Home Again	25	Teacher	20
Iliad or Odyssey	25	A Tale of Two Cities	20
To Kill a Mockingbird	24	Tom Jones	20

grams for slow, general, or terminal students is almost nonexistent. True, classroom observers reported that approximately 40 percent of the instruction in such classes emphasizes "literature," but literature here too frequently referred to selections of nonimaginative sorts—articles in special readers or special kits, factual materials selected for "high reader interest," or rewritten classics.

The magnitude of the problem is suggested by the appalling discovery that 74.4 percent of teachers agree with the statement that "Novels and plays adapted to suit the abilities of slower students are essential to a good English program because they afford these students an acquaintance with the best in literature." Only 16.1 percent disagreed. Although the desperation of many teachers to locate materials suitable to the needs of their students is understandable, they mistake the nature of literature itself and the purpose of programs in literature if they confuse the shell of *Gulliver's Travels*, rewritten as it must be for slow readers, with the work of art itself. Although certain books will admit a judicious cutting for classroom presentation, in the majority the very unity of content and form, the essence of art, is attacked through such processes. Widespread use of adapted titles thus represents an evasion of literature more dishonest if not more pernicious than exaggerated concern with historical or social factors.

Despite the support which many teachers indicate for adapted revisions of major works, observers found that such materials are less widely used than materials of no literary value at all in classes for slow or terminal students. What concerned observers most was the absence of thought and planning, of excitement and interest, displayed by both students and teachers when faced with the impoverished and inadequate reading fare provided for such classes. Even slow and average students can read with deep emotional and intellectual commitment, and materials are available to which they will respond. In one portion of this Study, some 1,617 students in tenth grade terminal classes were asked on a questionnaire to identify books which had provided "personally significant" reading experiences. Their responses are reported in Table 9. Even allowing for those individuals who might list *A Tale of Two Cities* or *David Copperfield* because they are the only titles they can remember, the list is singularly helpful in identifying a considerable number of books of good quality to which noncollege bound students can and do

Table 9

Significant Reading Experiences of Tenth Grade Terminal Students

(n = 1,617 responses)

Title	*Number of Times Mentioned*
Gone with the Wind	36
The Pearl	35
A Tale of Two Cities	35
To Kill a Mockingbird	34
The Call of the Wild	20
The Diary of Anne Frank	19
The Yearling	19
Hot Rod	18
Les Misérables	18
The Ugly American	15
The Good Earth	12
Kon-Tiki	12
The Old Man and the Sea	12
Old Yeller	12
David Copperfield	11
PT 109	11
Silas Marner	11
Black Like Me	9
Fail-Safe	9
All Quiet on the Western Front	8
The Longest Day	8
Mutiny on the Bounty	8
Twenty Thousand Leagues under the Sea	8
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	7
Great Expectations	7
The House of Seven Gables	7
Jane Eyre	7
John Paul Jones	7
1984	7
Shane	6
Black Stallion	6
Hie to the Hunter	6
The Story of My Life, Helen Keller	6
West Side Story	6
White Fang	6
Animal Farm	5
The Bible	5
Death Be Not Proud	5
Ethan Frome	5
Good-bye, Mr. Chips	5
Julius Caesar	5
Lost Horizon	5
Mickey Mantle	5
Mrs. Mike	5
Night Flight	5
On the Beach	5
The Raft	5
The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich	5
Run Silent, Run Deep	5

respond. Programs which encourage the reading of books like *Gone with the Wind*, *The Pearl*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Diary of Anne Frank*, and *The Yearling* are far more likely to develop good reading habits than are programs which concentrate on exercises involving articles on travel exploits or technological advances, or twenty-nine-page versions of major classics.

Not all programs for terminal students underemphasize the teaching of literature. In one interesting city school, students were reading in class ten different titles, all in paperback. These were books such as *The Raft*, *Mutiny on the Bounty*, and *The Call of the Wild*—works of good quality yet suitable for adolescent readers with academic limitations. Each student read two or three books as he found time, and the teacher organized small discussion groups with which she met (while other students were reading) to provide needed instruction. Indeed, many of the classes which seemed to be providing noncollege bound students with worthwhile experiences in literature were also classes which permitted the students some choice in reading. Those which failed tended to err along one fundamental dimension: teachers forgot their basic obligation to select imaginative literature of quality which could have meaning for their students.

Approaches to Literature

Teachers rely on various approaches to teaching literature, but only a minority—perhaps not more than one fourth—provide any analytical study of individual texts. More often than not, observers found the hours of literary study devoted to formal or informal talks by teacher or student on the age or period in which a work was written, on the writer himself, on the literary genre as an abstraction to be perceived in and for itself without reference to text, or on isolated facts extracted from the selection. Students were asked not to examine passages and incidents to determine how a specific image or episode contributes to the author's unified effect, but rather to accept blandly the theme or idea emerging from the work (or almost as frequently from the teacher's comments on the work) and to apply it to "everyday life," to "their own experience," or to other reading. Attempts to relate the reading to experiences which have meaning to the reader are commendable, of course, but not at the expense of understanding what the author has to say or how he says it. In too many classrooms, students discuss in vague and uncertain terms concepts which they would be sorely pressed to find for themselves in any work they had read.

Other evasions of literary study were frequently reported. Some teachers rely heavily on assigning a series of questions (sometimes their own but more often from the anthology) and ask students to devote class time to writing the answers. When followed by appropriate class discussion, such questions can direct attention to important internal aspects of any literary work, but too often the written answers marked the end, rather than the beginning, of literary analysis. Mimeographed study guides, outlines of plot structure, emphasis on approved definitions of literary terms without concrete referents in the works read, talks by the teacher on dates and places—these practices fill too many class hours. "Patterns of teaching literature by study guide questions, handouts of secondary materials, and lectures can tend to discourage . . . a pupil's experience with literature," reported one disheartened project observer. "Surely such approaches train the mind and offer a disciplined, intellectualized experience. But I fear many pupils then look on novels as case histories. How much do they read for the enjoyment of reading?"

At its best, the teaching of literature will help readers bring to bear on a literary text all of their critical awareness and discernment, their powers of perception, their values, their emotional and intellectual commitments. It involves teaching the students how to read literature as much as teaching about an individual text. Here indeed may be one of the difficulties in schools today: too many teachers seem to think that the ultimate end of instruction in literature is knowledge of and about *Macbeth* or *Silas Marner,* rather than refinement of the processes of learning to read *Macbeth* or *Silas Marner* with insight and discrimination. Where analytical reading of literature is taught consciously as a process, observers encountered some of the most exciting classrooms. In one school, for example, "classes in *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* deal with the play line by line, scene by scene, and concern themselves with such questions as the nature of the imagery, its relation to the theme, its total effect; the varieties of means by which Shakespeare characterizes his people; the contrasts between scene and scene, act and act; structure in the play, etc."

Analytical teaching of this kind is unusual, particularly when it permeates the instruction of an entire faculty, yet in a selected few institutions it dominates the entire program. When this happens, students seem not only to enjoy their reading more but also to respond more emotionally and with greater sophistication to the literature itself. Although observers did occasionally find "bloodless" exercises in the close reading of a work which were completely removed from literature, life, or anything of meaning to students, they reported far more frequently that teaching approaches focused on central dimensions of the literary work also ultimately led students to see the relationship of the work to life itself—but to see this in sophisticated and significant ways. At one school, for example, obvious differences were reported in the approaches to close reading used at different levels, yet the ultimate effect of such teaching of literature is clearly apparent:

> Teachers regard themselves as discussion leaders, or leaders of a Socratic dialogue in which students bear the largest part. At the lower levels, the discussion verges on recitation, with students going over the details of the plot and characterization, but by the last two years, students are able to discuss a novel at a very sophisticated level indeed. Because there are no final examinations or, I believe, factual quizzes, students do not make marginal notes—the most helpful form of note-taking, I believe—but the majority are so busy trying to comprehend the work through discussion that they do not simply take down what is said, *verbatim*. They are willing to challenge not only each other, but the teachers, and the result is the most stimulating series of classes I have ever visited.

That programs of teaching emphasizing the processes of close reading offer a particularly intelligent way of introducing sequence into literary studies is suggested also in the following report:

> Whether teachers are instructed in this "method" or not I do not know, but they all conduct their classes in the same relaxed, Socratic way. Students have had a reading assignment, usually an entire work. They come to class with the book, and the teacher begins by asking a question about the text: "Here in this story by Dylan Thomas and in this one we have two opening sentences, the one about 40 words long, the other about 180 words long. How do you account for the difference?" After a number of comments that gradually range back and forth throughout other elements of each story, including symbols, details of characterization, and tone, it becomes apparent that the entire class discussion is devoted to the question of style in literature; and the students, at the end of the hour, have come to realize that style is a complex thing involving a great many elements besides the mere arrangement of words. It may well be that another teacher in the following year will also have something to say about style, but there will not be duplication of effort in the usual sense because the *discussion* is new: it will be on a higher, or at least different, level in other class, and new elements will enter into it.

This, then, is a model analytical approach: text available; careful sequences of questions in discussion proceeding from the simple to the complex, from words to images, from incidents to episodes, from simple constructs to broad ideas and themes, from the obvious elements of plot and characterization to the intended meanings, style, structure, and author's purpose; and finally a consideration of the relationship of the text to other writings, to human experience, and to aesthetic and ethical problems. The slant and depth of the teacher's questions will depend upon the ability and maturity of the class, but what does seem important is that young readers learn to understand this approach and to adopt it as their own.

If teachers have been educated in such processes themselves, as their comments as well as the data on their preparation presented in Chapter 3 indicate they have, why is close reading seen so seldom in the classroom? One problem is clearly in the way in which time is spent. As Chapter 2 indicated, little more than one fifth of all class time is devoted to planned discussion involving students and teachers, the heart of any approach to literature.

Another problem is that the ability to ask questions which will generate discussion and lead ultimately to a generalization is a skill which few teachers seem to possess. More frequently than not, observers described teachers whose questions were self-defeating, curtailed discussion and interest, and as often as not generated so little response that the teacher was forced to answer them himself. Clearly these teachers need help with techniques for leading classroom discussion, yet few of the currently available books on the teaching of English seem to recognize this need. One can only speculate as to whether existing courses in methods of teaching English devote adequate time to such approaches, but the Evans survey reports that only 57 percent of methods instructors claim to place broad emphasis on conducting classroom instruction; 43 percent thus do not.[8] At any rate, one reason for the inadequate attention devoted to close reading in our nation's schools may be that teachers who know *about* modern analytical methods of literary study do not know how to translate this knowledge into useful classroom practice.

Undoubtedly another factor is the heavy teaching load. Even though he may face a class load slightly lighter than that reported nationally, a teacher whose preparation time is limited on the average to five to eight hours out of a fifty- (or more) hour work week is going to be reluctant to adopt an approach which without question takes more preliminary work than any other. If he wants to examine a literary selection through classroom application of modern analytical methods, the teacher must read, study, and ponder the text until he knows it intimately; even if he has taught it before, repeated rereading will be necessary if the details of the work are to be sufficiently fresh in his mind. In contrast, if he concentrates on facts about the work, on background discussion of author, times, theme, or source, he may be able to rely on his memory and his notes from a previous year. Almost without being aware of the choice implicitly forced upon them, teachers may thus be drawn away from the literary experience itself by the excessive demands of their schedules. That this hypothesis may in part explain the emphases observed in literature is suggested by the greater concern with close reading and textual criticism found in independent schools where teaching loads were severely restricted—not because the teachers in independent schools were better qualified than teachers in public or Catholic institutions, but because these teachers frequently met with no more than four classes of twelve or fourteen students each, classroom instruction in literature seemed to reflect more careful preparation, more attention to the text itself. The discovery that sustained attention to close reading may be possible only when teaching loads are reduced to permit adequate preparation seems to the directors to be one of the most important findings emerging from this Study.

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[8] William H. Evans and Michael J. Cardone, *Specialized Courses in Methods of Teaching English* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1964), p. 20.

How extensively do teachers vary classroom approaches in teaching works of different kinds? Because most teachers were observed only once or twice during a school visit, direct evidence was not readily available. However, in the group interviews with advanced twelfth grade classes, students were asked to describe normal procedures when a novel, a play, or a poem was studied in the classroom. From their responses it was clear that "discussion" is the most common approach to works of literature, although the varying interpretations which teachers seem to place upon this approach have already been noted. Yet only 43 percent of the classes mentioned discussion with respect to reading novels, 26 percent with respect to plays (for both it ranks as the major technique), and only 15 percent for poetry, where it ranks after both the study of theme and explication or analysis. Similarly, it was comforting to find that explication was mentioned more frequently than any other approach to poetry, disconcerting to discover that it was mentioned specifically by only 28 percent of the classes. This only substantiates other data indicating that close reading is not nearly so widespread as journal articles would lead one to believe, and that, when it does occur, it is more likely to be used with short works like poems than with passages from novels or plays.

Reports from students corroborate, also, the observation that schools devote insufficient attention to oral interpretation of literature. Oral approaches may be relatively unimportant in the study of a novel, but when, with respect to poetry, only twelve classes mention reading aloud, seven report listening to recordings, and three single out oral interpretation, a considerable question arises as to whether contemporary school programs are relating sound to sense. Even more startling is the observation that in only 20 percent of the classes is oral reading an integral part of the study of a play; whether young readers can learn to view the drama as theatre in any other way is debatable.

One can also regret that, with the exception of an occasional classroom test on analysis, writing was only infrequently noted by students as a part of their study of literature. Although teachers do seem to believe that *some* writing should be related to literary study, 60 percent disagree with the statement that "*Virtually all* student writing should grow out of the literature read and discussed by the class." Only 29 percent agree. On the other hand, many of the writing assignments which "grow out of literature" are as superficial and questionable as the following topics one teacher presented to tenth graders reading *Silas Marner:* "I Walked with Eppie," "William Dane Confesses," "I Was Eppie's Friend but I Didn't Get into the Novel." However such assignments may develop the individual's writing ability, it is questionable whether they contribute much to his understanding of literature. Other teachers, however, were very successful in directing attention to important aspects of a work through assignments involving the analysis and explication of a poem or short prose passage. In honors classes especially, the impact of advanced placement tests concerned with the analytical study of a particular poem or passage is apparent throughout the country; unfortunately, few teachers seem to attempt such analysis with less difficult selections in general classes. Nor do most teachers attempt to relate assignments in imaginative writing to literary study, though a number of students insisted that not until they actually learned to write a poem did they understand what poetry was. The experience of adopting the style of Ring Lardner, of parodying Tennyson, or of placing a character from Shakespeare or Chaucer into a new setting can develop in young readers fresh insights into literature, as an occasional observer report would indicate, but too few teachers successfully integrate such imaginative writing into the program of literary studies.

Guided and Independent Reading

Of major importance in any program in literature is the amount and kinds of reading which the students will do on their own, whether outside the classroom or in class as part of a formal individual reading program. To gather information on this dimension of the academic program, a special reading questionnaire was designed to supplement the reports of teachers and observers. A total of 13,291 usable questionnaires were processed, divided almost equally between boys and girls and among the three upper high school grades. Almost two thirds of the students responding, however, considered themselves enrolled in an academic course, and 77 percent indicated they planned to continue their education beyond high school. Though percentages were considerably higher than school records would indicate, they demonstrate the climate of opinion in the schools.

What did the questionnaire suggest about the reading habits of these students? First, they indicated that students in Study schools devote a substantial portion of their time to personal as well as required readings; the mode for both was three to five hours per week, which did not vary substantially with sex or grade. As might be expected, the admitted terminal students reported somewhat less personal reading than their peers planning to go on to college, but they do spend almost as much time on homework as the other group. The devotion of students in these schools to reading became even more apparent when advanced twelfth grade students were asked to rank their involvement in seven typical out-of-school activities. Studying or reading was ranked first by 2,265 of the 2,317 students responding, far ahead of school clubs, television, home employment, outside clubs, athletics, or outside employment.

Data from the reading questionnaires also suggested that there are very real differences in reading preferences, differences influenced by sex, grade level, and ambition, which any school must consider in attempting to guide and influence the personal reading of students. When asked to indicate which of twelve kinds of books they most enjoyed reading, the students responded much as had the populations of most earlier studies[9] of the reading interests of adolescents. The results indicate, for example, that interest in detective and sports stories declines from the tenth to the twelfth grade, while interest in both poetry and current events rises. Boys tend to be more interested in adventure, science, history, and sports, while girls enjoy mystery, romance, and biography. The data were also analyzed according to how the students indicated they wished to be remembered after leaving the school, and some other interesting patterns emerged. Those who wished to be remembered as brilliant students tend to choose humor, biography, and adventure stories; the would-be athletes prefer sports, adventure, and war stories. Those seeking popularity choose humor, romance, and mystery; and finally those who wish to be remembered as leaders in activities choose humor, romance, and biography. The differences found in this and other studies are sufficiently pronounced to suggest real differences in the interests and values underlying the choices made.

The questionnaire administered to advanced twelfth grade students was also used to investigate the criteria which students apply when they are selecting books. As Figure 10 indicates, stu-

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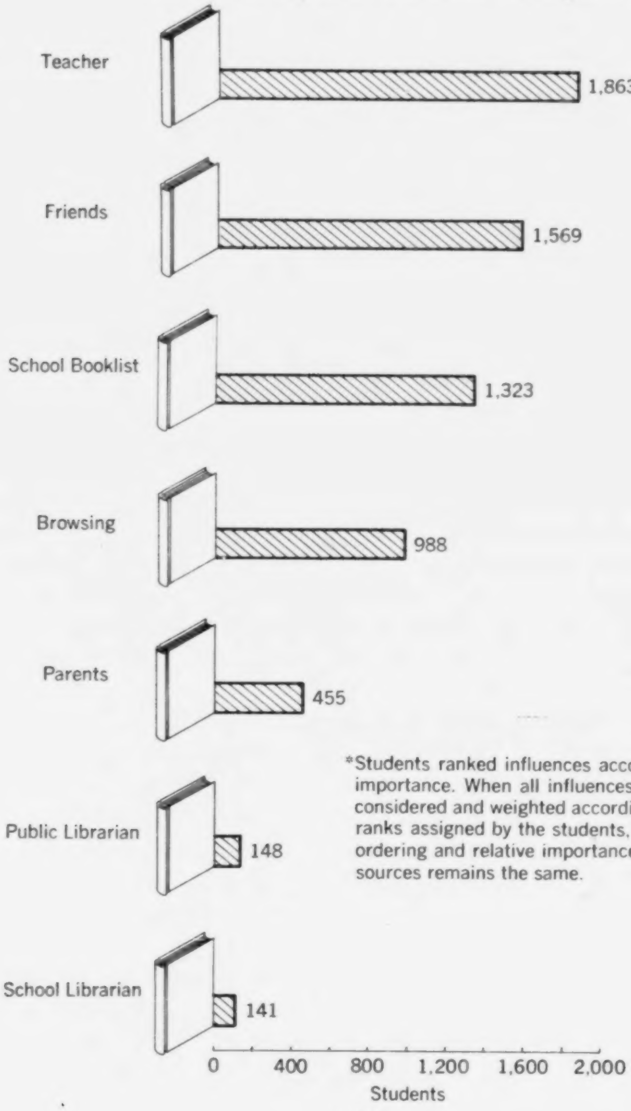
[9] George Norvell, *What Boys and Girls Like to Read* (Norristown, N.J., Silver Burdett Co., 1958).

Figure 10 **Influences on Book Selection**
(Reported by 2,286 twelfth-grade students—the 3 most important influences, unweighted.*)



*Students ranked influences according to importance. When all influences are considered and weighted according to the ranks assigned by the students, the ordering and relative importance of all sources remains the same.

dents in Study schools rely heavily on the recommendations and book lists provided by their teachers and their schools.[10] Guided reading programs, certainly one factor contributing to this reliance, sufficiently impressed observers to be rated ninth among distinguishing features of outstanding English programs. As one observer wrote about a program in a relatively small southern community: "Each English class has one reading period per week when the students read, fill in reports, or discuss their reading with teachers. Classroom libraries augment the school library—some rooms having as many as 200 or 300 titles including Camus, Freud, Joyce, Mann, etc. Almost everybody in this school is reading a book. Moreover, teachers know the books and talk about them intelligently." Indeed, immediate access to books which students will be reading is characteristic of the better of these programs; and their provision for extensive classroom book collections and reading time is one of the more promising innovations in secondary English. Having such collections available seemed not only an excellent basis for developing a program of guided personal reading, but also an indication that school and teacher viewed such programs as important. Thus it is discouraging to note that classroom book collections were found in great frequency by only 28 observers, in contrast to the 125 reports indicating such collections were infrequently or never seen.

Teachers did utilize other ways of organizing guided reading programs. In a few schools, for example, three-year lists of required out-of-class reading were intended to ensure that graduates would be acquainted with certain major works not studied in class. The responses of students show that such lists are a major factor in their reading choices, but the success of this practice varies with class time expended on reading and with the amount of teacher direction. Where completion of the reading culminated in class discussion or in the writing of a long essay about the works, students seem more likely to regard such assignments seriously. In several schools, summer reading assignments were reported as particularly beneficial; selected works are assigned during the spring—for example, *The Odyssey; Cry, the Beloved Country;* and *The Pearl*—read during the summer recess, and discussed during the opening weeks of the fall semester. Similarly, some classes study a single work of fiction like *The Secret Sharer* while individuals read from a list of related works —*How Green Was My Valley, Les Misérables,* and others. This approach provides an opportunity for contrastive analysis and clearly relates individual reading to the assigned intensive reading program.

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[10] The relatively slight importance reported for school libraries, as well as other data which emerged on their use, seemed of such significance that Chapter 10 of this report is devoted entirely to a discussion of this aspect of the findings of the National Study.

Wide reading carefully related to continuing classroom work, then, does seem to be characteristic of outstanding programs of English. An increasing number of schools provide hours for reading within the regular class schedule; the most successful teachers use such time for conferences with individuals and groups. According to twelfth grade students, most reporting on individual reading is provided through written book reviews, only a few of which were described by observers as the routine written assignment long associated with such chores ("Write one paragraph on character, one on plot, one on most interesting incident," etc.). Criticism of such assignments has apparently had some effect. More frequently, students were asked to develop some central idea about the books they had read. Oral book reports are still reported frequent in 40 percent of the schools; indeed, observers saw and questioned more than a few of such presentations. But the students interviewed also recalled more exciting moments when they reported on their personal reading: classroom discussions led by the teacher, panel discussions on books and topics, small group book discussions, written comparisons, dramatic presentation of characters. The list is almost as long as the numbers and ingenuity of English teachers themselves.

Some supplementary studies of selected schools also indicated the effect of certain classroom procedures on students' personal reading. It was found, for example, that when the English teacher urges students to use public or school libraries, the use of these libraries increases only slightly, while more dramatic increases (7 percent, according to student reports) occur in the reading of paperbacks when they are recommended. Descriptive material supplied by project observers suggests that these increases are far larger in schools which have paperback bookstores, whether organized by the librarian, business department, student council, or English department. One comparatively new school with approximately 1,500 students reported selling 27,000 individual paperbacks during a five-month period from September to January. (There is reason to believe that the exceptionally high total was partly influenced by the inadequacy of the library collection, but the figure seems remarkable under any circumstances.)

The investigators can report no evidence, however, to indicate that the use of classroom libraries increases student reading. When practices in ten schools in which a high percentage of teachers reported classroom libraries to be essential were compared with practices in ten in which teachers reported single anthology texts to be basic, no significant differences were found in the amount of time students allot either for homework or for personal reading, and differences in reading preferences were slight and insignificant. If there was any notable difference, it was that students in classes using a single anthology expressed interest in a greater variety of reading topics, perhaps to satisfy a personal demand not answered by the restrictive instructional program. What such collections do accomplish is to provide the teacher with a significant means of guiding personal reading, as well as to furnish a valuable and immediate source of books for reference and amplification during class discussions of literature.

In one important area, however, the investigators did discover important, albeit inconclusive, evidence of the impact of instructional emphases on personal reading. The questionnaire administered to teachers asked them to indicate whether they believed the literature program or the composition program to be primarily responsible for the successful preparation of outstanding students in English. Their responses were then correlated with the reading habits of students from their schools. Surprisingly, in schools rated high in composition, results indicated an increase of 7 or 8 percent in the amount of time students devoted to both personal and required reading. This finding might well serve as the basis for a separate study. To the project staff members, the explanation seemed to lie in the greater emphasis on formulation and communication of ideas in successful composition programs. Forced to seek and evaluate ideas so that they might strengthen their own writing, students read widely. In many of the programs rated high in literature by teachers (not necessarily by project observers who frequently based their assessments on different criteria), a rigorous program often restricted to a single series of texts may sometimes fail to generate such interest in the independent discovery of ideas. In others, requirements are so demanding that students have little time to pursue their own reading choices.

The critical discovery is that, where attempts are made to provide worthwhile literature for adolescents, students *do* read. Again and again, observers contrasted the obvious amount of reading under way in schools with classroom book collections, good libraries, and paperback book stores with the paucity of such reading in schools which had given little thought to providing a good supply of worthwhile books. Even with the present diversity, students in these schools report that they read an average of eight books a month, albeit many titles come from sources outside the school. (See Chapter 10.) It seems likely, however, that both the quality and the magnitude of the reading for most adolescents can be substantially increased by a conscious effort on the part of teachers and schools.

Summary

Literary study does receive attention in these schools, for an average of 52 percent of class time emphasizes this aspect of English. In certain schools and with certain classes, the teaching of literature is particularly distinguished. Programs vary considerably in the quality of the books taught, in the ways of organizing instruction, and in many of the approaches to teaching. More important than any particular pattern of organization seems to be the extent to which the program provides for the careful study and close reading of individual texts and supports this close reading with a broadly based program of guided individual reading. Classroom libraries seem almost indispensable in providing access to worthwhile reading selections. Exciting examples of analysis and discussion were reported from schools in all sections of the country, but even more widespread was confusion about the nature of close reading and about how to translate into classroom practice knowledge of the critical reading of literature acquired in college courses.

In many of these schools, teachers have achieved considerable success in teaching literature. As one teacher explained, "Fundamental to the teaching of literature is a teacher and a book. That is the way we approach literature here." And the observer agreed: "The four teachers all said to their classes, in effect, 'Look, we are all questioning the human condition. This book or play—*Macbeth, The Scarlet Letter, Lord of the Flies*—may tell us something about the human condition.' These teachers expect their students to have adult motivations. There was no talking down and no phony talking up. They shared their students' wonder and helped each other eliminate their mutual ignorance. They looked at language and style and structure as well as theme and idea. The meaning of the book grew into something he had not seen before for everyone, teacher or student." This surely is the teaching of literature at its best.

CHAPTER 6

The Teaching of Composition

Certainly the component of English which is the most elusive and difficult to assess is the teaching of composition, and observers faced many problems in trying to characterize individual programs. Although corrected class sets of papers were usually made available to visitors during their one- or two-day stay, and although these papers were solicited with the understanding that they would be typical efforts of students, there is reason to believe that in a number of instances the papers had been handpicked to show both students and teachers to their best advantage. Observers were also hampered by limitations of time and could not always read all of the papers at hand. Nevertheless, these papers, supplemented by interviews with students and teachers, afforded direct knowledge about the program; indirect data concerning the frequency of writing and the emphasis and point of view in writing instruction came from questionnaires.

The most discouraging conclusion which the project staff reached concerning instruction in writing is that there is simply very little of it. On the basis of classroom observation, teachers at all levels in all schools combined spent only 15.7 percent of their class time emphasizing composition. There was slight variation among grade levels and even less between those groups considered terminal and those labeled college preparatory, but the relatively small incidence of teaching directed to writing improvement came as a surprise to observers. Moreover, the bulk of the instruction during the 15.7 percent of total class time devoted to writing was instruction *after* the fact—after papers had been written.

The primary process of writing instruction consists of having students write compositions followed by teacher "correction" and the subsequent return of compositions—in many cases to be read by students and revised. This is a time-honored system that will doubtless continue to carry much of the weight of instruction, but it is a tenuous chain of action and reaction which, like the chain letters of two decades or so ago, can be useful only if all links follow in orderly progression. From the observation of project visitors the chain is seldom continuous; and the result of these efforts is, at best, a fragmentary approach to the writing process.

The Correction and Annotation of Papers

A sampling of thousands of papers that had presumably gone through the complete cycle revealed one third that had not been revised in any way, another third with gross errors of spelling and usage corrected. Only in about 12 percent of the high schools had most students revised their writing completely in response to teacher "correction." There was no way to determine statistically, of course, how effective this process was either with the minority of students who revised or with the vast majority who did not. In spite of the lack of empirical knowledge, however, there can be little doubt that those students who are forced to think back through their first writing and then rework the original into something better must gain in fluency and precision.[1]

For most teachers, correcting papers is synonymous with teaching writing. To a question posed during the interview with entire English departments about the proportion of teaching time or emphasis on composition, the most typical response was that more time and emphasis on composition were impossible with existing class loads. In other words, there was simply not time to correct more papers than were currently being produced. According to individual questionnaires, teachers spend an average of nine to twelve hours weekly reading and correcting papers, a sizable proportion of time considering their other professional obligations. Similarly, students report that they submit an average of one theme a week, with able senior students tending to write more frequently and tenth grade students somewhat less often. It is difficult to imagine how this enormous paper load might be increased and still have any significance for either student or teacher.

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[1] Richard Braddock, Richard Lloyd-Jones, and Lowell Schoer, *Research in Written Composition* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1963), pp. 35–36.

The average English teacher in these schools meets about 130 pupils daily. If he spends as much as 8.6 minutes in annotating each theme—the average number of minutes which Dusel reported required "to teach writing and thinking," [2] then eighteen hours weekly would be required for paper correction alone. When it is realized that the average number of pupils per teacher nationally is about 150,[3] and that some teachers, even in this sampling, are expected to teach writing to as many as 200 pupils in six different classes, it would be irresponsible criticism to assert they are not doing justice to one of the main elements of English instruction. The simple fact is that they cannot.

One method for reducing the paper load of classroom teachers is to employ lay readers, a practice being followed in a significant number of high schools across the country.[4] Among those schools participating in the National Study, 20 percent indicated that readers were used to one degree or another. In larger districts, they are usually assigned to schools after they have satisfied certain requisites, including the successful completion of a qualifying examination. In the case of schools in smaller, more autonomous districts, readers are employed directly on the basis

[2] William J. Dusel, "Determining an Efficient Teaching Load in English," *Illinois English Bulletin*, 43: 1 (October 1955).

[3] Committee on National Interest, *The National Interest and the Teaching of English* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1961), pp. 98–99.

[4] A good discussion of such programs appears in Virginia Burke, *The Lay Reader Program: Backgrounds and Procedures* (Milwaukee, Wisc., Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English, 1961).

of personal contact and previous experience; more often than not they are former teachers in the respective schools.

It would be impractical to assume that outside readers could upgrade a school's writing program merely by increasing the frequency of writing, and, indeed, no direct relationship between the frequency or quantity of student writing and the use of readers was found. What readers can do is relieve the laborious burden of correction to allow more time for the *teaching* of writing. If classroom teachers must spend ten or more hours a week reading papers, they have substantially less time to prepare thoughtful and purposeful lessons. No doubt this demand has much to do with the sometimes superficial marking that observers noticed on sets of papers.

Lay reader programs differ in a number of respects. In some, readers always remain behind the scenes, in a few instances transacting most of the paper exchange through the mail; in others, readers are required to visit classes when writing assignments are made, or even to hold conferences with students. Rarely do readers grade and correct more than a minority of student papers, and usually teachers review grading by sampling a number of papers from each set marked by a reader. In some programs, notably in the so-called Rutgers Plan,[5] graders are assigned to specific teachers and classes—i.e., those classes following the Rutgers plan in other respects. Less structured programs allow several teachers to call upon a reader as they require.

Interviews with students who have had experience with theme readers revealed mixed reactions. Interestingly, some students are delighted with the notion that an "outsider," someone who doesn't know them, will read their papers and pass judgment from what they believe to be a more objective point of view. Other students prefer the more intimate touch and object to their work being read by anyone other than the teacher. It is fair to say that, in general, student response to the employment of theme readers is negative, but not overwhelmingly so.

[5] Paul Diederich, "The Rutgers Plan for Cutting Class Size in Two," *English Journal*, XLIV (April 1960), pp. 229–236, 266.

Teachers, too, are as a whole ambivalent in their attitudes toward a lay reader program, though, for a sizable portion of the teaching community, feelings run very high. Ten percent feel lay readers are detrimental, 8 percent that they are absolutely essential, and the majority that they are of only minor importance. During department interviews, the subject of lay readers arose with some regularity in response to the question of how departments might spend a sum of money added to their department's budget, but it was ranked after such items as recordings, overhead projectors, supplementary books, and clerical help. It is clear that most teachers do not view the establishment of lay reader programs with any great urgency; indeed, most are quite emphatic in stating that funds would be better spent in reducing the number of students per teacher.

Clearly, lay readers do not provide a panacea for a poor writing program, though they can make a good one better, and reports from project observers make possible a number of generalizations about successful programs. The best enlist the services of very able readers who write well themselves, can recognize problems that others may have, and are able to translate their analyses into terms which high school students can comprehend. Frequently, though not always, such people were themselves English teachers. These readers work on a regular basis with one or two teachers, observing some classes to become more familiar with the capabilities of the students and the teaching methods used. In the best programs the reader is more than a proofreader, encouraging and commenting on good efforts as well as pointing to errors in mechanics and usage. To this end, a series of conferences with students as well as the teacher can greatly enhance the effectiveness of the reader. No matter how well structured the lay reader program may be, however, the teacher must still teach writing. To foist onto others the burden of reading and correcting without accepting the responsibility for continuous instruction would be to renege on the contract implicit in the provision of readers.

The reports of project observers make clear that individual

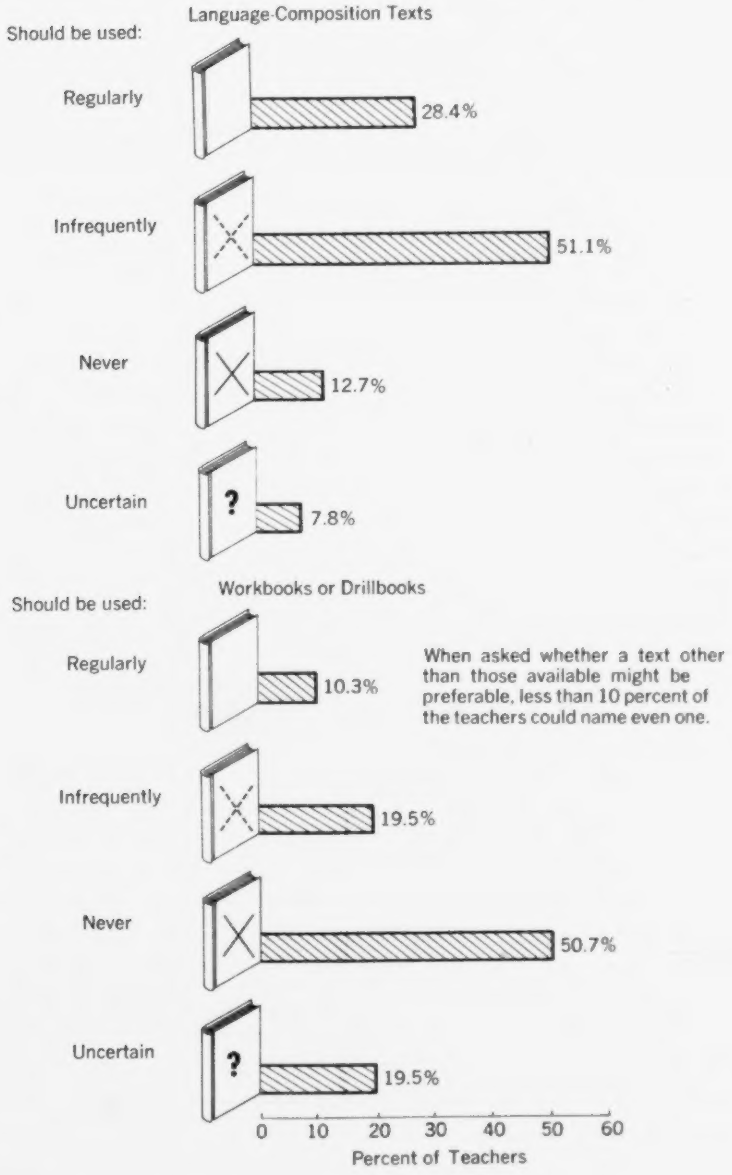
English departments must give more thought to their objectives and practices in the teaching of student writing. Much that was seen suggested little more than mechanical activity: assignments manufactured to suit the time of year, compositions of cryptic symbols relating to the mechanics of writing rather than to its substance. Department chairmen did report, when asked about instruction in writing, that the element of primary importance was organization of ideas followed by clear thinking or logic. These concerns rated well ahead of such matters as diction, style, or originality and somewhat ahead of the more pedestrian "correct" mechanics and usage. Similarly, when asked to give priority to criteria for evaluating student writing, chairmen considered clarity of thought and organization, appropriate development, and sentence structure, in that order, to be of greatest importance. Yet these conditions simply do not obtain even in these schools. In reviewing student assignments made available to them, observers noted that two thirds of the papers were corrected from a negative point of view involving only correcting faults and assigning grades. In only 17 percent of the schools could they say that comments were designed to teach writing and thinking—the avowed purpose of the whole cycle of writing, correcting, and revising. If there is little instruction in these important matters by way of teacher comments on individual papers, and none at all in the classroom, where are students to learn about them?

The Focus of Instruction

One source of instruction, of course, is the occasional or systematic use of textbooks. Figure 11 shows, however, that less than a third of the teachers interviewed indicated that they regularly made use of such texts; even fewer responded favorably to traditional workbooks used to provide drill in grammar and usage. From statistically less solid ground, project observers reported that they seldom saw composition texts in use, although they were often in evidence; most schools lend or rent such books to students or ask students to purchase them. If composition texts are, in fact, as little used on the national scale as they

Figure 11 The Value of Textbooks and Workbooks in Teaching Composition and Language

(Interview responses of 370 teachers)



When asked whether a text other than those available might be preferable, less than 10 percent of the teachers could name even one.

were in the project sample (and there is no reason to assume any great difference), the issue is raised of the considerable public expense versus the slight instructional value of the books. One problem in this regard is that texts frequently must be purchased from lists compiled by local school boards or state authorities, a requirement that can force a teacher to use a book he feels to be inferior to one he might have chosen himself. Significantly, however, less than 10 percent of these teachers who indicated disaffection for the composition-grammar books which were authorized would or could suggest other titles. In large measure this may reflect the failure of commercial publishers to offer materials appreciably different in content or approach from those the teachers already have available.[6]

A content analysis of fourteen sets of composition-grammar textbooks by James Lynch and Bertrand Evans[7] several years ago reveals an interesting parallel between the emphasis found on instruction in composition in the National Study and the proportion of instructional material as evidenced by the number of pages given to composition and rhetoric in the texts. Over twice as many pages dealt with matters of grammar, usage, and mechanics in these books than showed any emphasis on units larger than the sentence. In view of this surprisingly small attention to writing in the composition texts, one almost wonders whether the lack of classroom instruction in writing reported by observers was somehow a reflection of the quantity of treatment in available textbooks. Similarly, the whole mode of teacher correction mirrors the rationale implied in the textbooks: about two thirds to the problems of grammar-mechanics-usage and a much less significant proportion to the rhetoric, the development and organization, of writing. Although department chairmen and well-meaning English teachers feel that the latter are of greater value, these matters are clearly not receiving the priority they deserve.

[6] Within the last few years, however, several companies have offered texts that are different with respect to their viewpoint concerning language and the emphasis given to instruction in writing.

[7] James J. Lynch and Bertrand Evans, *High School English Textbooks: A Critical Examination* (Boston, Mass., Little, Brown and Co., 1963).

Lynch and Evans also bewail the lack of any real differentiation in the approaches which these textbooks take at successive stages of composition instruction. A given series will typically list essentially the same topics for each of the four years of high school, topics more often than not concentrating on experiences or ideas assumed to be very close to the students' immediate concerns rather than on literary experiences. While a glance through almost any of these series would corroborate these assertions, one must also note that at least twice as many of the papers reviewed by project observers were based on literature as on all other subjects combined, including personal experiences, the social sciences generally, and imaginative topics involving creative writing. Although no absolute data were tabulated in this regard, teachers themselves generally indicated that a good writing program should allow for diverse writing experiences, including exposition, argumentation, description, and narration, but that literature should "very often" serve to stimulate such writing.

From time to time, high school programs have been criticized for allowing a disproportion of creative writing to more formal and academically respectable assignments in exposition. Indeed, some critics would, in Procrustean fashion, lop off all imaginative writing as extraneous to the legitimate concern of the high school, insisting that appropriate expository assignments based on literature will offer enough to feed the creative impulses of the students. From the point of view of project staff and observers, however, this position is for a number of reasons untenable. Among papers given to observers for review, for example, there were far fewer instances of creative writing than of any other kind. In descending order of frequency, students wrote on: (1) literary topics, (2) subjects close to their own experience, (3) nonliterary subjects requiring special information, and (4) topics classified as "creative writing." Perhaps as a direct result of the rigid assignments and mechanical instruction that characterize so much composition teaching, two thirds of the sixty advanced twelfth grade classes which indicated they would like to see an improved composition program specified more creative writing, an emphasis reflected too in the enthusiasm of students enrolled in such classes. In the opinion of the project staff, the occasional experience of creating a poem or story can carry a number of extrinsic dividends. The opportunity to create something even remotely literary may not turn the student into an artist, but it should help him develop an appreciation of the distinctions between the language and conventions of literature and the language and conventions of his own immediate world. While the project staff does not recommend sudden, wholesale, and capricious efforts, it does feel that the occasional assignment in the area known as creative writing can be of significant value. Whether the note of protest against creative writing and the emphasis on expository themes by committees of the NCTE and the CEEB Commission on English has changed a previously distorted pattern, or whether such writing has never been overly emphasized in the better schools of the country, the National Study reveals no need for a radical shift in the *kinds* of writing being asked of students in most of the cooperating high schools.

Continuity and Sequence

As suggested above, most of the time and attention devoted to composition entails an *analysis* (whether superficial or comprehensive) of the finished product. With few exceptions, any concerted efforts of English departments have been directed to setting standards for grading or for establishing requirements for student writing in terms of numbers of words or assignments. Although courses of study proclaim worthy enough objectives relating to "improving abilities" or "increasing writing skills," the project staff found little thought or effort given to *how* a student's writing ability can be improved. As a result of this lack of focus on the *process* or *sequence* of writing, the writing experience of students in most programs suffers from either redundancy or fragmentation. Students are therefore inclined to view the program in composition as a disconnected series of activities, and they can scarcely be blamed if, faced with the same topics, they write in the same ways they have found successful before. If growth and improvement are to be expected from the students, they must be built into the program itself.

One method of encouraging continuity and progression in the individual classroom is to use cumulative folders or notebooks to contain all of the consequential pieces that a student writes. Teachers in the cooperating schools were generally in favor of this practice, as it gave them an opportunity to observe student progress throughout the year. Some departments had gone even further, preserving selected writings over a three- or four-year period to add some measure of continuity to the program as a whole. In either case, this procedure, while providing an important perspective on the growth of the individual student, is at best a roundabout method of ensuring sequence and continuity within the writing program of a school.

Perhaps as a result of the currently popular theory of the spiral curriculum, a number of schools have written new courses of study, frequently called "sequential guides" to composition. Inherent in the design of these programs is the principle that the important skills of writing are developed incrementally. This does not imply that the ninth grade students learn all there is to know about constructing sentences; tenth grade students, the paragraph; and juniors, a multiparagraph composition. Instead, a typical guide provides from twenty to fifty writing experiences for each grade level, from which some twelve to twenty will be chosen by the individual teacher on the basis of the needs and capabilities of his class. At all levels students are required to write narration, description, exposition, and argumentation, though in the ninth grade there is likely to be a greater emphasis on narration and description, and in the twelfth, greater concern with more complex and subtle forms of exposition and argumentation. Many of these assignments are clearly related to the literature taught at particular grade levels, and at times students are asked to emulate the style of an author—to write "in the manner of" John Buchan or E. B. White, for example, while developing a personal essay. Sequential composition guides differ in the extent to which they include other apparatus: standards for grading, a style sheet for students, a glossary of technical terms. Some contain explicit instructions to teachers and list questions to direct the class discussion preceding the writing experience; others depend on the teacher and the general context of each course to motivate the sequential assignments. With the shortcomings of composition textbooks as noted above, it is important that high school departments focus in some manner on the essential problems of sequence and continuity in the writing program. Merely to determine how many compositions should be required at each grade level begs the critical questions involved.

The Term Paper

The high school research or term paper is a fairly well-entrenched requirement in many English programs. About 71.7 percent of the teachers in the Study schools support a requirement for at least one such paper in every student's high school career. Although there is no discernible pattern for such papers, ranging as they do among subjects in literature, history, politics, science, and current events and varying in depth and scope, the tradition is somehow maintained that college bound students should be submitted to the process of gathering information, taking notes, and preparing a paper of anywhere from five to fifty pages. For some time the value of this process has been questioned by many high school teachers and college English instructors on the grounds that such writing is frequently a waste of time —time that might more profitably be spent on other aspects of composition or on the study of literature and language. Such writing, it is claimed, is in no sense *research* and more often than not results in both plagiarism of source material and unfortunate superficiality: teachers are prone to emphasize the mechanical aspects of taking notes, preparing footnotes, and compiling bibliographies to the exclusion of processes of thought or logical development; topics are usually unrelated to any other aspect of English, often turning to the trivial or transitory; few high schools have libraries adequate for such research.

These arguments are countered by individuals who feel that it *is* profitable for a student to pursue a subject in depth and to sustain his best writing efforts in an extended paper. In the process, it is assumed, he will learn much about the library and about using source material. Furthermore, the term paper advocates state, other academic departments both expect students to know the proper form and procedure for writing a long source paper and regard the English class as the appropriate place for such instruction. Supporters also claim that former students return from college to tell them how useful this instruction has been in their beginning college course, to some extent refuting the frequent argument that college departments of English do not expect freshman to know how to write term papers and, in fact, would prefer that incoming students be taught other things instead.

The most profitable means of resolving this dilemma is to inquire to what extent the research paper helps students become more able writers in the whole scheme of individual composition programs. Only from this perspective can individual teachers and departments satisfactorily determine whether their efforts at instruction as well as their students' long labors offer an efficient vehicle for writing improvement. Though such a perspective was of its very nature not available to the members of the National Study, their observations do allow a number of inferences about the general practice of requiring long source papers of high school students.

Individually, many observers read some long papers that would suggest the manifest worth of such assignments. Selected samples showed that a number of high school students are capable of writing sustained, coherent, and comprehensive papers. In contrast to these samples, of course, were many others that suffered from all of the ills of bad writing and dishonest thinking imaginable, compounded in these respects by the demand for length. Unless the long paper evolves from other written assignments over a period of years, and unless the subject matter of these efforts has some relationship to English (or else some immediacy to related disciplines), observers feel that the instructional time might better be spent on other writing. The crash programs which they occasionally witnessed, where students were thrown into the school library and asked to produce twenty pages of prose in two weeks, are not worthwhile educational pursuits; nor is mere instruction on the formal aspects of note-taking, footnoting, and manuscript form valuable *per se*. Unless the whole enterprise grows from roots which have already been nourished by other work *in English*, it is the critics rather than the supporters of long source papers who must be heeded. To consider instruction on the long paper as a necessary end in itself, as a service function to other high school departments, or as an assumed college requirement makes the task unrewarding and the practice unsound.

Approaches to Writing

In a small number of participating schools, schoolwide "composition days" have been established, allowing for infrequent but planned occasions when all students write compositions of specified length and type. Teams of readers assess the strengths and limitations of all of these efforts, lending an objective measure to pupil improvement and a positive touchstone to the tenor of the writing program. The most worthwhile by-product of this enterprise is that it focuses attention on this important component of English and, in spite of the mechanical aspects, motivates students to improve their work. Too often, from the observation of visitors to schools, English departments are willing to relinquish the essay in final examinations in favor of the more easily corrected objective question. Whether or not these tests are a valid measure of other aspects of the English program, they neither measure a student's composing ability nor motivate him to improve. Such a device as the schoolwide "composition day" can mitigate some of the shortcomings of the final objective test in English by asserting once again the importance of the act of writing.

Another promising procedure in the teaching of composition is the pupil-teacher conference. In department interviews, teachers conceded that systematic discussion with individual students about their writing would indeed be beneficial. They also pointed, however, to heavy class loads, obligations to police corridors or locker rooms, and "extracurricular" assignments that curtail after-school conferences. At one school this problem was circumvented by naming two additional English teachers as "composition teachers" whose sole function was to teach students singly or in pairs in frequent tutorial sessions. In addition to their regular English classes, the majority of students in two grade levels were assigned to one or the other of these teachers for one conference a week over the entire year. Administrators and teachers at this school were convinced enough of the worth of this program to continue it beyond the experimental phase. In view of the value placed on these face-to-face encounters, teachers might well look more closely at methods to institute conferences on a more frequent basis than obtains at present, even at the expense of other class activities. To be effective, of course, it is incumbent upon teachers to recognize that techniques different from those used in teaching a class are open to them in tutorial sessions. A conference presents an opportunity for the teacher to reach even the most reluctant writer and to come to grips with more salient problems than those implied in "correctness."

Observers watched numerous sets of papers being returned to students during class sessions, but they were struck by the very few times that teachers took advantage of these occasions to teach some facet of writing. Some teachers had prepared lists of "common errors" that were written on the board or reproduced for class correction, but very few took the time to reproduce or analyze an entire paragraph or theme in this fashion. Significantly, even fewer teachers used opaque or overhead projectors to facilitate a common study of the larger aspects of composition, those very elements of organization, logic, and development which claimed high priorities on their questionnaires. In the judgment of observers, such direct instruction can fill an unfortunate void in the whole effort of teaching writing in the schools. Another neglected source of practical instruction is the practice of having students read each other's papers. At the least, such a device can lead to superficial improvements in usage and mechanics; at best it contributes to an overall development of style. Students with a clear notion of audience and a more immediate sense of purpose will write with a clarity and conviction usually lacking when they know that only the teacher will read their work.

A number of programs throughout the country use models to help students achieve a better sense of direction and form in their writing. Particularly those schools with sequential programs have employed literary models (and occasionally student efforts) to suggest patterns that students can emulate. Though there is the built-in hazard that students will ape the original too closely or will consider it too far above their own abilities, the judicious use of models is a positive and valuable device in teaching students to write better. Similarly, it is often valuable for the teacher himself to write an assignment that he has given to a class and then to use his own paper as a model for demonstration. Obviously discretion is necessary, but as an added dividend teachers are made aware of some of the problems and pitfalls that they are prone to overlook when they merely correct the errors of others.

Summary

Needless to say, there are many qualitative differences among the various composition programs. Some committed departments are involved in continuous efforts to improve instruction in writing by a number of methods, whereas others make no concerted effort to create cohesive, schoolwide programs, allowing individual teachers their own frequently haphazard approaches. Optimistically, in observer reports of general strengths, programs in composition were cited fifty times, second only to teaching staff in frequency of comment. On the other hand, inadequate programs in composition were cited forty-one times, ranking seventh among general weaknesses of English programs.

When teachers were asked to indicate on questionnaires the aspect of English in which they felt most deficient, composition outranked all others (including literature, language, reading, and speech) by a considerable margin. Approximately 25 percent of the teachers surveyed reported taking a course in advanced composition since they began teaching, and a solid 82 percent revealed that such a college course would be of "some" or "great" importance to them. These figures suggest commitment and a professional need that is not always met, but the newly established NDEA Institutes, many of which offer a composition component or, failing that, oblique instruction in the teaching of writing through their workshops, allow a note of optimism. Furthermore, changing certification requirements are beginning to prompt a noticeable addition of new writing courses to the offerings of colleges and universities.

In spite of the evidence of considerable writing activity in most English classes, observation reveals that there is very little effort directed to *instruction* in writing. For one reason or another, teachers depend heavily on the process of correction and revision to improve student composition. Skillful teachers with enough time to make the process significant and enough patience to complete the cycle through revision are able to promote student achievement, not only in mechanical "correctness" but also in rhetorical power and stylistic flavor. Where the conditions of skill and time are not present, however, instruction through correction is extremely limited.

While teachers are generally conscientious in assigning and grading many sets of papers, there is a clear lack of consistent and progressive instruction in writing. After observing a large number of high school English classes, one can easily get the impression that compositions are often assigned in lieu of any ordered classroom instruction, as though mere practice were all that was needed. The project staff is convinced that the quality of the writing assignments, the care taken by the teacher in correcting the paper, and the continuing dialogue between writer and reader are of greater importance than the frequency of writing. Moreover, unless these qualities are an integral part of the writing program, it is distinctly possible that frequent but routine writing assignments will inspire little more than trivial efforts that promote no growth whatsoever in writing ability.

To add confusion to neglect, teachers are in no clear agreement about methods and priorities in teaching students to write. The responses of students and teachers to a check list of concepts which might be taught at various levels indicate clearly that concepts related to rhetoric and composition are only inconsistently presented; some are overtaught, some not taught at all. Although a good deal of research has been undertaken on the teaching of writing, few of the findings are easily translatable to classroom technique. Indeed, some results appear at least superficially to be in conflict with the claims of other investigations. As indicated in the Braddock report, there remains a manifest need for more controlled research in a number of basic areas related to the teaching of composition.[8]

Confusion about conflicting ideas and ignorance of research, however, provide no rationalization for an inadequate composition program. Teachers cannot wait in expectation of the seminal study on the teaching of writing; they can combine knowledge, experience, and intuition to develop meaningful programs of writing in the high school. To take the position (as some individual teachers have) that writing "cannot be taught," or that the process is too mysterious for words, or that it has no more sequence and content than a bag of tricks, is strangely inconsistent with the general pattern of educational philosophy in our time.

[8] Richard Braddock *et al., op. cit.* See especially Chapter 3, "The State of Knowledge about Composition," pp. 29–53.

CHAPTER 7

The Teaching of Language

That language, of the three major components of English, is the least well taught in the Study schools was obvious, whether the data considered came from project staff members, teachers, or students. Programs in language were cited in observer reports too infrequently even to be ranked among special strengths of the schools, falling far behind programs in composition, literature, reading, and even speech. In contrast, programs in language ranked fifth among general weaknesses, higher than either composition or literature. Only administrative and supervisory problems seemed more glaring to observers—i.e., inadequate departmental leadership, inadequate provision for slow learners, lack of general sequence and integration, and unreasonable teaching loads.

In personal interviews, the teachers, too, when asked to point out special strengths, turned away from their work in language toward programs in literature or composition; they also ranked changes in language instruction as among the most urgent needs of the English curriculum. Students similarly recommended changes in this aspect of the program, though revealing uncertainty and differences of opinion about what should be done. Of 2,317 twelfth grade college preparatory students completing the questionnaire, 226 called for more or improved language instruction; 130 asked for less. Moreover, only 17 of the 99 advanced twelfth grade classes interviewed by the project staff indicated that their instruction in language had been particularly beneficial, compared with 60 for literary study and 39 for composition.

The Confused Situation in Language

One reason for the apparent inadequacy of programs may be that so little time is actually devoted to the study of language. In the 1,609 classes visited by the project staff, only 13.5 percent of the teaching time emphasized language. The relative emphasis dropped from 21.5 percent in grade ten, where one third more time is devoted to language study than to composition, to 8.4 percent in grade twelve, with about half of the emphasis given to composition. The relative emphasis on language study in classes for terminal or noncollege students is slightly higher (at 19.9 percent) than in classes in general. Even for these students, however, the emphasis is not quite half of what is apportioned to the teaching of literature.

The most dramatic evidence of the confusion in language instruction was obtained through the concept check list. Administered separately to department chairmen and to twelfth grade classes, the check list proved less helpful in revealing any consensus about inclusion, exclusion, and sequence than in distinguishing between those conceptually-based topics which are widely taught and those which are not. Results make clear, for example, that however programs in literature may vary from place to place, more than 90 percent of all schools do teach such concepts basic to literary study as metaphor, imagery, blank verse, satire, and epic.[1] Equally revealing is the comparative absence of agreement over concepts associated with the study of language. According to students, any direct consideration of levels of abstraction is unknown in 70 percent of the schools; determiners are not mentioned in 91 percent; among other language concepts not introduced in a high percentage of schools are slanting, argumentation, nominative absolutes, consistency of diction, euphemism, and sentence patterns. Department chairmen more frequently report the teaching of these concepts than do students; even the chairmen, however, are aware of the discrepancy between attention to literary concepts and attention to those associated with language.

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[1] The complete results of the concept check list are included in Appendix D.

In both group and individual interviews, teachers expressed their concern about new developments in English language instruction and often questioned the adequacy of their preparation in this area. Indeed, when asked to specify needs in continuing education, 71 percent indicated interest in advanced study of structural or generative grammar; another 66 percent expressed interest in studying the history of the language. More than a few, of course, revealed the usual dissatisfaction with current trends in language study, rationalizing the "do nothing" attitude in their schools on the grounds that "Teachers must wait until the linguists agree" or "We are waiting for a textbook that will really explain modern grammar to students." For such ultimate textbooks, the schools will wait a very long time indeed.

One disappointing discovery was the absence of attention to the linguistic aspects of literary study. In view of the emphasis on literature in many of these programs, a greater concern with the language of literature—choice of words to express key images, texture of language, rhetorical and expressive features—might be expected. Only an occasional teacher seemed to concern himself with such matters, however, perhaps because only an occasional teacher concerned himself with the processes of close reading. Secondary school teachers by and large have yet to realize that the study of the language of literature offers an important bridge between the literary and linguistic components of the English program.

In no area of language are standards more variable, confusion greater, and differences more apparent than in the teaching of usage. No other statement on the issues questionnaire elicited such disparate responses as the suggestion that "Because language patterns vary constantly according to use, it is unrealistic to insist on a single standard of usage among students." Of the 1,481 teachers polled, 42 percent agreed, 43 percent disagreed, and 15 percent were undecided. Teachers with sixteen or more years of experience agreed much more extensively (47 percent) than did teachers with five or fewer years (38 percent). Inasmuch as the younger teachers are more likely to have completed college courses in modern grammar and usage, this tendency is surprising. Presumably any formal study of modern grammar and usage should lead to some understanding of geographical and social variations in usage and of the complexity, yet the necessity, of identifying some appropriate but flexible standard of usage for instructional purposes. Still, experienced teachers, many of whom had not completed formal courses in language, tend to be less doctrinaire in their views and to stress in their language and composition teaching effective communication rather than grammatical accuracy. To them, insistence on a single standard seems futile.

Like most observers, the directors of the Study applaud the efforts of able teachers in the better programs to stress effective communication. They believe, however, that such emphasis is possible in programs which also provide for an intelligent sequence of study in the English language. The discovery that a majority of English teachers are confused about the nature and study of the English language is not new; for at least a decade, articles and publications have directed attention to this problem.[2] What is surprising is the discovery that in these selected high school programs so little is being done to alleviate the confusion. According to linguists and specialists in language, a well-designed school program in the English language will contain, in addition to the study of grammar and usage, some attention to dialect study, lexicography, semantics, the history of the language, and perhaps phonology. Yet such a broad conception of language study has yet to permeate the thinking of any but a very few teachers. The majority still confuse the study of grammar and usage, talk about "functional grammar" (by which they ordinarily mean assigning drills based on student errors), and provide instruction in only the most haphazard way. The data collected in this Study would indicate that the nation's specialists on the teaching of English have yet to persuade teachers in the secondary schools that the study of the language is more than a very minor adjunct to the program as a whole.

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[2] See, for example, the two reports of the Committee on National Interest, *The National Interest and the Teaching of English* (1961), *The National Interest and the Continuing Education of Teachers of English* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1964).

Representative Programs

These discouraging findings are not intended to suggest that specialists on the teaching of the language have had no effect at all on the teaching of English. Quite clearly, for example, two decades of empirical research showing that traditional schoolroom grammar contributes little to the improvement of student writing have had a substantial influence.[3] Most department heads and supervisors "know" that grammar does not influence writing; some even apologize for admitting any grammatical study to the program but do so, they claim, because of reported demands from parents and students, pressures from colleges, or insistence by teachers that young people learn "terminology" so they will understand corrections on their compositions. Few teachers interviewed in these schools accept the modern linguist's justification of the study of the English language as a humanistic study in its own right.[4]

Most teachers are aware of present scholarly stirrings in language, reading as they do the *English Journal* and other professional publications with some degree of regularity. (See Chapter 3.) But what they have read seems to have convinced many to drop any substantial emphasis on formal study of language rather than to substitute the study of structural or transformational grammar, for example, for traditional schoolroom grammar. In short, in the overwhelming majority of these schools the formal and systematic study of English has been largely abandoned. Little direct attention has been given to the study of historical, geographical, or social aspects of language, leaving only a concern with problems of syntax and usage that appear in the students' own writing and speech. Errors in sentence structure especially are emphasized: parallelism, misplaced and dangling modifiers, run-together sentences, faulty reference, problems in agreement. On some occasions teachers present a series of student-written sentences for correction; on others they merely review the problem and then ask students to turn to appropriate sections of the available language book. Whichever method is actually applied in the classroom, it is clearly accidental if a student is presented with lessons so complete and so ordered that he is able to develop any larger conception of the basic structure of English.

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[3] Such studies are summarized in Henry C. Meckel, "Research in Grammar, Composition, and Literature," in *Handbook of Research on Teaching*, N. L. Gage, ed. (Chicago, Rand McNally & Co., 1963). Also see Richard Braddock, Richard Lloyd-Jones, and Lowell Schoer, *Research in Written Composition* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1963).

[4] See, for example, Paul Roberts' "Introduction" to the *Roberts English Series* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, & World, Inc., 1966); or Owen Thomas' essay on "Grammar in the Schools" in his *Transformational Grammar and the Teacher of English* (New York, Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, Inc., 1965), pp. 205–225; and Harold B. Allen, "The Role of Language in the Curriculum" in Robert F. Hogan, ed., *The English Language and School Programs* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1966), pp. 259–268.

If such "functional" grammar is one emphasis in classroom instruction, study of English usage is the other. Often confused with grammar by teachers and students, usage involves the study of the forms of English appropriate on different occasions. In few of the classrooms visited were students considering the varieties of English usage and the ways in which social level, situation, geographical region, and medium of communication dictate the appropriate form. Rather, instruction more often concentrated on isolated drill intended to establish patterns for using a particular form. On some occasions such drills were related directly to errors committed on student papers, much as is the study of sentence structure; more often the approach was guided by a list of usage items assigned for instruction and mastery at a particular grade level. Regrettably, in view of the substantial research indicating the contributions of oral drill and pattern practice to the effectiveness of instruction in usage, few teachers utilized oral approaches,[5] relying instead on silent drills involving choice of form or completion of blanks.

[5] See the discussion of this point in Walter Loban, Margaret Ryan, and James R. Squire, *Teaching Language and Literature* (New York, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1961), pp. 558–561.

A Special Problem: Language Books

The relative absence of formal programs in English language instruction and the attempt to relate what language study there is to the writing of young people may explain the rejection by teachers of present language and composition books. Though again and again observers noted such books on classroom shelves, more than 70 percent of the 370 teachers questioned indicated they did not like the language and composition books their schools required and did not use them with any regularity. (See Chapter 6 for further discussion of this point.) Although forced in virtually every instance by school boards, administrators, supervisors, or department chairmen to bring such textbooks into the classroom, the teachers simply ignored them. Some teachers admitted that, though they would use single copies of books from several series to suggest exercises for student use, they prefer to teach "grammar and usage" in their own way. As indicated earlier, their instruction tends to concentrate on errors in the students' writing, an approach which the inflexible organization of many language books would not allow.

When queried about the reasons for requiring a single series of language and composition texts, many department chairmen stress the need for continuity and sequence in instruction. Because many schools lack a clear definition of grammar, usage, and other components of language study—indeed lack any controlled curriculum in this area—they seize upon the single series as a way to provide scope and sequence. Chairmen quite candidly admit the deficiencies in the books, and most were aware of the report by Lynch and Evans[6] which demonstrated anew that, whatever the claims of publishers, most of the language and composition books teach the same content at every grade level. In almost none of the schools, however, were administrators aware that the books are usually ignored. It would seem that in most schools today the nation's taxpayers are spending tens of thousands of dollars to purchase language books which teachers do not want and do not use but do not publicly question. The problem seems particularly serious in those schools in which funds for purchase of learning materials are so meager that classroom book collections, supplementary literature books, and reference and library books are in short supply.

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[6] James J. Lynch and Bertrand Evans, *High School English Textbooks: A Critical Examination* (Boston, Little, Brown and Co., 1963).

The rejection of language books may be related directly to the absence of concern with organized programs for teaching language. Quite clearly, a well-designed grammar, however simplified, may be a useful tool in assisting the teacher to provide systematic instruction, and many teachers claim to be waiting for such an introduction to modern grammars. Language history and social and regional variations of the language, too, require reading material and study exercises which many teachers will not be able to supply on their own. These needs were recognized by a considerable number of teachers and by a recent national conference of department chairmen, which recommended that teachers have available in the classroom handbooks on English grammar and usage for reference use.[7] The textbook can never be the curriculum, however, and only when teachers agree on common objectives for teaching the English language can they expect more useful materials to be developed.

This conclusion is supported by the finding that, where language books are purchased for a particular purpose, they appear to be carefully used. In certain schools, admittedly with unique or experimental programs, two student introductions to modern grammar by Paul Roberts, *Patterns of English* and *English Sentences,* were being faithfully taught at specified grade levels. *Dialects U.S.A.*, NCTE's introduction to regional variations in language, was studied in another school. Two or three programed textbooks were being used in certain other situations —often in classes of slow students or in twelfth grade review groups. Slim volumes providing a series of drills in English usage were sometimes a handy aid; and some teachers described plans to use the boxed *Individualized English*, a self-instructional program of usage drills. None of these practices was common enough to suggest any trend, but it does appear that teachers of English are more likely to be satisfied by single language books written for particular purposes than by those in any presently available series attempting to cover all aspects of language and composition.

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[7] James R. Squire, Roger K. Applebee, and Robert J. Lacampagne, *High School Departments of English: Their Organization, Administration, and Supervision* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1965), pp. 21–22, 54–58.

Some Promising New Programs

A few schools are introducing specially planned units on the history and study of language, though such developments are found more frequently in the experimental programs discussed in Chapter 12 than in the original 116 schools. Because a substantial number of teachers and department chairmen are concerned about the implementation of recommendations on language study emerging from recent studies by the National Council of Teachers of English, the Commission on English, and other groups, several of the new units are described here in detail. Though these are by no means representative, they may be harbingers of a welcome change.

Schools in one large city had redesigned their high school programs for college bound students four years prior to the visit by project staff members. The pattern for language study prescribed throughout the district included the study of syntax in grade nine—presented in Paul Roberts' *Patterns of English*—and required that all teachers study the textbook closely to establish a consistent approach. A four- to six-week unit on lexicography was planned for grade ten, involving not only consideration of the meaning of words but a comparison of three standard student dictionaries. One unique feature of this program was an introduction to the history of the dictionary, including the study of selected pages photographed from Johnson's 1755 dictionary, the 1889 *Century Dictionary*, and the *Oxford English Dictionary* of 1933. The language unit for grade eleven was devoted to dialect and linguistic geography and covered such problems as the effect on language usage of differences in location, education, and occupation. Grade twelve included the study of a unit on the history of language, taught in relation to the study of selections from *The Canterbury Tales.* An advanced study of the problems of appropriateness in English completed the four-year sequence.

This program is not unlike many of the experimental programs in the English language now attracting attention throughout the country. Project observers, noting both its successes and its shortcomings, were particularly impressed by the commitment of the English teachers to instruction in structural grammar and by their confidence in what they were doing. This attitude seemed to be the result of an inservice education program, supported financially by an outside foundation, which included summer workshops as well as meetings during the school year. Thus many of the controversies which seem to beset other programs were not apparent in this one. Still, at a time when an increasing number of linguists and curriculum specialists were suggesting that aspects of transformational theory might offer more help for students than structural grammar, observers expressed concern that, however successful the program of continuing education had been in weaning teachers away from traditional schoolroom grammar, it seemed not to have prepared them to examine subsequent developments in grammatical study.[8] In some ways, therefore, it seemed as if the school may have been in danger of merely substituting one dead order for another.

The different aspects of this program had met with varying degrees of success. Classes studying *Patterns in English,* despite a disturbingly rigorous adherence to the textbook at the expense of teacher creativity, were at least directing their attention toward key generalizations about the English language, an intellectual focus too often missing in other programs. The units on the dictionary, though not taught during the period of observation, were reported as interesting and successful, particularly with college bound students. Most teachers, however, had abandoned the intensive study of the nature of dictionaries with groups of slow

[8] Since visiting the school, project observers have been informed that an inservice program stressing transformational grammar has been instituted and that subsequent changes were being planned for the teaching program.

learners. Least successful were the units for high school seniors, perhaps because less thought and preparation had initially been given them, but the teachers hoped these would be soon revised.

Without question, the language unit which elicited the most enthusiastic response from teachers and students was the study of the regional and social varieties of English. Evidence of enthusiasm for dialect study was apparent on bulletin boards, in student notebooks, in conversation with teachers. A special series of exercises and classroom experiences for teaching dialects had been developed by a district committee and distributed for teacher use, and the English chairman asserted that this study had proved particularly interesting to many of the slower students in the school.

A small midwestern school had planned a similar sequence emphasizing even more than the one described above the direct study of the growth and development of modern English, presented in sequentially organized units which developed basic generalizations about language. The approach is distinguished in plan from several other such programs in that the units on grammar tend to be intensive, short, and narrow in scope and can often be introduced within larger thematic units or units involving literary study. Designed for use in a six-year school, the program concentrates on the grammar of the sentence during the early years and on broader studies of semantics, rhetoric, communication systems, and the history of the language during the senior high school years. The broad concept of language embracing not only structure, history, and linguistic geography, but also speech, rhetoric, and semantics seemed commendable to observers, although they questioned at times whether some of the teachers had sufficient education to handle successfully the ambitious program of studies that had been planned. Indeed, the attitude of faculty members contrasted sharply with that noted in the western school described earlier; the difference no doubt reflected in part the lack here of sustained efforts at inservice education.

A few other experimental language programs could be mentioned, but all resemble those described already. The study of the grammar of the English sentence tends to be scheduled early, often in grades seven and eight, with little more than review planned during the senior high school.[9] The study of language history tends to cap the sequence in the twelfth grade, perhaps because at this time students traditionally are concerned with historical studies in other fields. Studies of dialect and regional variations not only are increasingly introduced into grades nine and ten, but also seem to awaken an unusually enthusiastic response from young people. The success of most such units suggests that these offerings will soon become widespread. In addition, teachers are trying to concern themselves with such matters as lexicography, semantics, rhetoric, and argumentation. Sometimes introduced as special units, more often related to programs in composition, these offerings are receiving more varied reactions and have yet to prove themselves.

Summary

Emphasis on largely isolated usage drills and "functional" grammatical analysis related to the writing of students themselves is the major feature of language study in these schools. In retrospect, a decline in emphasis on language instruction from 21.5 percent of class time in grade ten to 8.4 percent in grade twelve reflects for the most part less concern with English usage. Many schools seem to schedule a last formal review in grade ten of all difficult problems in English usage, though some concern with sentence structure seems to continue throughout. Fewer than 20 percent of the ninety-nine classes of twelfth grade college preparatory students interviewed by staff members admitted receiving during their senior year assignments in anything they recognized as "grammar." A greater emphasis on language study found in classes for terminal students (almost 20 percent throughout the Study) seemed to reflect less a serious intellectual concern with linguistic matters than a greater reliance on drill sheets and workbook exercises dealing with particular items of usage. Project observers were especially suspicious of the value of such programs for terminal students.

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[9] At the Culver Military Academy, John C. Mellon has developed two one-year courses for grades seven and eight dealing with sentence transformations. In some ways these books seem to require more time and attention than many schools are willing to devote to the study of grammar, but they do illustrate a bold attempt by one institution to provide instructional materials not commercially available at the time.

The study of language in these schools thus involves minimal attention to the systematic study of grammar and virtually no attention to dialectology, lexicography, phonology, and the history of the language, all of which are recommended by many specialists today. At almost every point, the study of language seems less important to teachers than the teaching of writing, and most instruction in language is subordinate to the study of composition. Usage instruction, like that in grammar, is frequently based on errors which students make in their writing and speech, although some schools assign specific items for emphasis at particular grades. As Miriam Goldstein indicates in her description of language programs in certain of the better schools, the effect of twenty years of research in pedagogy and of confused argument about content and method in grammatical study has been to drive English grammar as a formal subject from the organized curriculum.[10]

Fortunately, however, there is some indication of new forces affecting the curriculum in selected schools. Unlike regular programs which concentrate on structure and usage in relation to practice in writing, the new programs clearly view language as possessing a content involving theoretical considerations about the nature and structure of language, its history, and its variations. Perhaps because many teachers are not yet sufficiently informed about the varied aspects of language study, new programs seem at times inadequate and even confused. But it is folly to compare the teaching of newly identified content and approaches introduced by newly educated teachers with programs backed by the tradition and experience of decades—the important fact is that a reconsideration of language instruction has at last begun.

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[10] Miriam B. Goldstein, *The Teaching of Language in Our Schools* (New York, The Macmillan Company, 1966), pp. 165–181.

CHAPTER 8

The Teaching of Reading and Speech

The teaching of reading and of oral language skills is difficult to isolate in the high school curriculum in English. Although both are essential to nearly every activity which occurs in the classroom, teachers are apt either to associate sequential instruction with the primary grades or to feel "they teach it all the time." The inability in either case to specify the place of these two areas in the secondary school curriculum suggests what was indeed found by project observers: most schools are failing to provide any integrated or sequential training in reading or speech for classes at any level—remedial, average, or advanced.

Reading in the Secondary School

Reading is an essential part of the English program; it involves not only fundamental skills but also important attitudes toward personal reading, the selection of reading material, and, in its broadest sense, the program in literature. In the schools visited, the teaching of reading was viewed by the majority of English teachers as something foreign—a study identified with special preparation, with colored cards bearing readings of graduated difficulty, with complicated tachistoscopes and controlled readers—unfamiliar materials that can be used only with small classes which have thirty-five to fifty-five minutes of quiet work three or four days a week. Few teachers seemed to relate such activity to the teaching of a sensitive, accurate response to written communication, literary or otherwise.

Department chairmen in the schools of the National Study agree, however, that the fundamental purpose of reading instruction is to help the student become a more active and critical reader. They seem therefore to recognize that developmental reading instruction in the total program in English includes not only instruction in the basic skills (word attack, comprehension, speed) but also instruction in the reading of literature. Learning to adjust reading speed according to the variety of materials and purpose of the assignment is also reported to be important, as is helping students understand better what they read in other subjects. But when the English departments were interviewed and asked to comment on the responsibility they as a department had for the teaching of reading, only 16 of 112 departments claimed a *great* responsibility for the subject; only 37 claimed *some* responsibility. Some 14 departments felt *no* responsibility, and 33 considered the teaching of reading the obligation of a special teacher or program. Observers heard teachers remark, on the one hand, "We aren't trained to teach reading," and on the other, "We teach it every day, whenever we open our anthology." But those things "always done" are far too often never really done. Indeed, careful distinctions between the teaching of literature *per se* and the teaching of students to *read* literature were not found by project observers in many classrooms.

The lack of attention to the developmental skills of reading, even the skills of reading literature, is revealed by the data on the use of class time. Department chairmen claim that only 3 to 4 percent of instructional time in grade ten is devoted to reading, and this declines to 2 percent in grade twelve. In a school year of thirty-six weeks, this would allow only four to seven class hours for the teaching of developmental reading. Of 1,609 separate classes, observers actually found primary emphasis devoted to teaching reading in only 71, 12 of which were designated as *reading* rather than regular English classes. Altogether, reading received some attention, however minor, in only 10 percent of the classrooms. Here it must be remembered that these classes were not solely for the advanced: 298 were for college bound students; 682 were for average students; 187 were for slow learners; and 442 were classified as heterogeneous. Thus, high school English programs in this Study devote overwhelming attention to the teaching and study of literature but not to the skills involved in *reading* such literature. The student is apparently expected to become an "active and critical reader" simply by reading extensively.

In their summary reports, observers rated the schools on a seven-point scale with respect to the effectiveness and coordination of instruction in reading carried on either by the department of English or by a reading specialist. Eighty-five of the 173 rated were assigned to the two lowest rankings, almost as many as to the other five ratings taken together. In these schools, at least, any coordinated teaching of reading appears to remain a thing of the future.

These findings are especially distressing when it is noted that about 50 percent of the schools actually employ reading specialists, usually as members of the English department. Apparently the presence of such a staff member does not guarantee success either in organizing special reading classes or in planning a program for teaching reading as part of the English curriculum. Too often observers reported special reading classes engaged in something other than reading instruction; sometimes the teachers themselves were admittedly untrained or uninterested; all too frequently there was confusion of the problems involved in teaching reading to all students with those involved in teaching slow learners. What perhaps started as a noble and needed enterprise degenerated into little more than routine presentation of mimeographed drill sheets or into class periods in which all pretense at instruction was abandoned and students were left free to read individually chosen books on their own.

Project observers also looked for evidence of several special kinds of reading instruction. Developmental reading programs, though most prevalent, were found in a well-developed form in only 17 per cent of the schools. Reading laboratories were not introduced in over half these schools, and seldom seen in all but five others. Similarly, work in remedial reading was found much in evidence in only seven of the ninety-five schools reported on. More than thirty different drill books and workbooks were found in special reading classes in different schools, but only the ***SRA Reading Laboratory*** and, to a lesser extent, the ***Reader's Digest Skill Builders*** are used widely, perhaps because both tend to present the teacher with a packaged system purporting to be self-instructional. Tachistoscopes, reading pacers, accelerators, and reading films were found here and there, but the "hardware" seems not to be widely used even by reading specialists. Indeed, in several schools, rooms of such equipment stand strangely idle while desperate officials search for reading teachers who can manipulate these mechanical aids.

Teachers of English individually seem unimpressed by the need to teach reading. When 438 teachers of English were asked in private interviews to identify the strengths of their English programs, fewer than 8 pointed out the program in reading, although none of them considered the program as a weakness or suggested changes. When asked on their individual questionnaires to rank various areas of English in the order of their importance to the success of the English program, only 194 of 1,331 teachers ranked the teaching of reading first. Such findings confirm the suspicion that the average English teacher does not consider a conscious effort to teach reading a significant aspect of the English program.

Students seem to rate the reading programs about as the teachers do. In interviews with ninety-nine classes of twelfth grade students, only eight groups identified learned reading skills as a forte. Unlike the teachers, however, these same students indicated on individual questionnaires that improvements in the reading program were desired; indeed, such improvements were the fourth most frequently requested change.

The students and teachers who wish to see greater attention paid to reading are not calling for programs fraught with the paraphernalia of the specialized skills teacher. Such specialists can provide important help to individual students and can work with teachers in several fields, but, as high schools are now organized, a strong developmental reading program for all students seems likely to come only as English teachers in general see the differences between reading and the *teaching* of reading, between literature and the *reading* of literature. It is not likely to come, for instance, until the high school teacher of English is more aware than he is at present that in teaching *Julius Caesar* he has an obligation to prepare students to read other Shakespearean plays as well. What special skills are needed to read a sonnet? To analyze an essay? To comprehend a metaphor? Questions such as these deserve much greater attention than they currently receive.

The application in the classroom of modern critical approaches to literature is another practice that should inevitably involve the acquisition of more mature reading skills. If teachers would start to recognize that the teaching of literature in high school must necessarily involve the teaching of reading, at times explicitly, it would at least be a beginning. But in the long run even more basic skills must be part of any sound program of reading instruction. Unfortunately, evidence in this Study suggests that, in these schools at least, departments of English have yet to find effective ways either to incorporate developmental reading into the regular English program or to provide remedial instruction for the substandard reader.

Speech in the Secondary School

When teachers of English in the schools of the Study were asked to rank the areas of English according to their importance to the success of the English program, only one fourth of the teachers ranked instruction in speech and oral language among the top three; only 3 percent ranked them first. In their interviews, department chairmen estimated that 5 to 8 percent of class time in grades ten, eleven, and twelve represented speech and oral composition, but observers found that in practice the figure was only 4.9 percent, dropping from 7.2 percent in grade ten to 2.9 percent in grade twelve. Yet on the issues questionnaire 44 percent of the teachers agreed, with another 22 percent undecided, that, because of the increasing emphasis on the spoken word, more stress must be placed on the skills of speaking and listening, even if such emphasis means devoting somewhat less time to literature and composition. Also, 83 percent of the teachers indicated that every student should have the opportunity to give a prepared oral presentation in his English class each semester.

This verbal support for oral English was reflected in department interviews when teachers were asked what responsibility, if any, the English department assumed toward the teaching of speech or oral language. Almost immediately groups would respond "much responsibility"; yet when asked more specifically how this was planned, they were hard pressed to answer. Most typically, of course, they pointed to the elective course in public speaking offered in the majority of these schools during the junior or senior year (almost always as an addition rather than a substitute for English). Yet an informal comparison of enrollment and class size suggests that in most schools not more than 15 to 20 percent of the graduating students could possibly have completed a course in speech.

In short, the evidence indicates that the teaching of speech is given short shrift in a majority of English programs in the Study. Not only is little time consciously devoted to speech instruction, but even the opportunities provided by class discussion are ignored or mishandled by the majority of teachers. (See Chapters 2 and 5.) Just as a minority of teachers seem to realize that there is a difference between teaching composition and marking writing assignments (Chapter 6), so comparatively few seem to distinguish between teaching speech and providing speech activities.

In a few schools the need has been recognized, and English departments are taking steps to provide better speech education. One pattern establishes a requirement of one semester of speech, often during the tenth year, as part of the four-year high school English sequence. Schools not on the semester plan will frequently pair an English teacher with a speech teacher and ask the two to exchange classes at the end of the fall semester. A somewhat different solution was encountered in another school where a speech consultant is assigned to work with three tenth grade English teachers, offering speech instruction during the regular English period at scheduled intervals throughout the semester. A third approach, found only in schools with team-teaching experiments, involves a qualified speech teacher as part of each three- or four-member team. No one of these solutions seems perfect, but each ensures that every student will receive some formal training with a qualified speech specialist.

But speech, like composition, cannot be taught in a few weeks, and the responsibility for continuing instruction almost certainly falls to the English teacher. It thus becomes important for him to understand clearly the relationship of oral to written language, the contributions of oral language practice to the improvement of usage, the possibilities for teaching the logical uses of language through discussion, and the contribution of oral interpretation to programs in literature. Yet quite clearly the teachers in these schools have not considered carefully the relationship of speech to English. Many seem unaware of the revival in rhetoric, in scholarly attempts to link the rhetoric of the oral tradition with that of the written tradition in new programs for the schools.[1] Even more do not sense or utilize consciously the informal opportunities provided by class discussion, group work, classroom drama, and the oral reading of literature. Although the National Study itself can do little more than identify the problem, it seems important that leaders in English curriculum development concern themselves more deeply with the interrelationship of speech, language, literature, reading, and composition, both in our schools and our culture. As Walter Ong recently said,

> . . . We live in an age which is becoming increasingly conscious of the central importance of the sequence of the media in the development of man's life world through the course of history. Man

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[1] The Curriculum Study Center, University of Oregon, for example, appears to be developing instructional materials based on rhetorical principles which apply to both speech and written composition.

> has lived successively in an oral-aural (preliterate) culture (his state everywhere for all but the most recent fraction of his time on earth), a chirographic culture, a typographical culture, and now an electronic culture. By contrast with the tendencies of the chirographic and typographic cultures to quiet voice and produce the isolated writer and reader, our present electronic culture is activating voice once more and resocializing men—of course, in quite a different way from that which prevailed in primitive oral cultures before the invention of writing and script. In a world dominated by voice on telephone, radio, and television, and in the meetings and conferences which, as much as machines themselves, form the fabric of technological life, the written and spoken word play back and forth against one another in a dazzling variety of ways. . . .[2]

Summary

Neither the teaching of reading nor the teaching of speech receives adequate attention in the English programs included in this Study. Much of the difficulty seems to result from inadequate planning. Whereas considerable time is expended in most schools on planning a curriculum in literature and composition, and at least some schools have considered ways of strengthening the program in language, few have directed the attention of teachers to instruction in reading and speech. A sound curriculum in literature must provide experiences in the reading of literature and in oral interpretation; a sound program in composition must embrace oral as well as written composition; a sound program in language must deal with oral as well as written language. Preservice and inservice programs are needed to stress the interrelationships within the field of English. Neither current national curriculum projects in English nor new programs being developed by the schools are devoting sufficient attention to the development of young people in these significant areas of English.

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[2] Walter Ong, S.J., "Literature, Threat and Conquest," *College English,* XXVII:8 (May 1966), pp. 620–623.

CHAPTER 9

The Evaluation of Learning

So varied were procedures used by schools in the Study to evaluate student learning and teaching effectiveness that, well after visits to most schools had been completed, a special questionnaire was devised to provide some objective data on certain practices. The department chairmen were asked to furnish information concerning the comprehensiveness, the type, the content, and the construction of the final examinations. Although early evaluation of teaching is mandatory to successful programs, the project staff felt that, in concentrating on the significant end-of-the-term examinations, most departments would indicate their attitudes and approaches to all dimensions of evaluation, and the responses reflect above all a great variety in the procedures used to evaluate student achievement and teaching success.

Some 57.6 percent of the schools in the Study report no portion of the final examination departmental. This explains in part why many chairmen did not respond to other questions concerning the type and content of the examinations; in these schools the teacher was solely responsible for writing the final examination, if he chose to give one, for each of his classes. A majority of the schools thus ignored one important way of promoting articulation among grade levels.[1]

Moreover, the writing of final examinations for schools which do administer departmental exams involves the department chairman in only 19 percent of the schools and grade-level chairman in another 14 percent. Most common is the departmental examination written by the teachers at the respective grade level and, next, that written by all the teachers. While the primary responsibility for the departmental examination should indeed lie with the teachers, the involvement of the department chairman also seems necessary if the examinations are to evaluate in some manner the effectiveness of the program, not simply the performance of the student.

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[1] See the discussion in Chapter 4 of the use of departmental examinations in the coordinating and supervising of instruction.

The responses indicate a slight predisposition toward essay rather than objective examinations, with forty-six schools indicating that 50 percent or more of the final examination was essay, compared with thirty-two for objective tests. There was considerably more agreement concerning the comprehensiveness of these examinations, i.e., the extent to which the examination was designed to test all aspects of English. At least 71 percent of the schools reported that 50 percent or more of the year's work was reflected in the final examination; indeed 53 percent of the schools reported more than 70 percent coverage of the year. More than 70 percent of the schools, too, do not require any form of examination testing minimum essentials to be mastered at a particular grade level.

These reports on comprehensiveness, though encouraging, necessarily depend on the degree to which the chairmen were aware of both what was being done in the classroom and what was being tested on the examinations. Literature, for example, was found by observers to involve some 52 percent of all classroom activity, while language took only 13.5 percent. Examination content reported by chairmen did indeed show a distinct edge for literature, parallel with the findings on classroom teaching; but a study by the project staff of samples submitted by the schools indicated far more attention to language, especially to matters of usage, than to literature. Although many chairmen did not feel qualified to report on their departments' practices, this very vagueness only reinforces the observation that the evaluation of student achievement and of instructional effectiveness emerges as one of the areas demanding the immediate attention of the English profession as a whole.

The department chairmen, because of the nature of the questionnaire, included many explanatory notes. Some of these indicate the problems:

> We have an anarchic system. Presumably final exams are to be given, and presumably they are to count. Who gives them, when, and how much they count remains a mystery. Some of us are now struggling to establish a little order out of the chaos.
>
> Each teacher in the department writes his own examination questions—not an ideal situation, perhaps, but orders are orders. I do try to discourage objective examinations, not always successfully, since I have no real authority.

Another chairman, however, in two paragraphs outlined a sensible plan that deserves full quotation:

> One hundred percent of the final examination is based on work of the year; conversely, however, 100 percent of the year's work is not covered by the final examination. From our point of view, grammar is emphasized in a functional or structural way; composition is a continuous thing throughout the year; literature is both intensive and extensive with student choices in many areas. The final examination, therefore, reflects the student's growth in writing and thinking and the literary analysis based on the depth study which he has made as an individual choice. We do not, however, attempt to take all the works of all the authors covered during the year and have an objective test to see what percentage of the data has been memorized by the students.
>
> It is difficult to give a factual answer to the creative attempts we use in arriving at a final grade. To begin with, the final grade is an evaluation rather than an average. We do not take the final exam, give that a value of X and the average of the year's work a value of 2X in arriving at Y as the final average. Since our grades are called evaluations, the principal expects the grades to make sense;

> on the other hand, a student who has caught fire should not be handicapped in a final evaluation and graded as an average student any more than a great author should be considered mediocre because half his books were mediocre. On the other hand, a student who began well, but doesn't continue his dedication to hard work and production cannot expect to be granted an evaluation of good work which has tapered off to poor work.

A study of the sample final examinations in English submitted by eighty-five departments revealed many problems in the evaluation of learning as it is currently attempted in most English classrooms. Although it was clear in department chairmen's responses that examinations do not reflect all that each teacher hoped students would derive from a course, teachers may nonetheless be attempting to measure too much. English as language involves almost every aspect defined in Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* on both the cognitive and the affective level, and few of the traditional multiple choice questions are designed carefully enough to test more than one of the several different levels, cognitive and affective, at a time.[2] Indeed, in an objective examination of one hundred items, if only one level were tested by each question, the test would evaluate each level at the most twice, not a large enough sampling to reflect accurately the knowledge of the testee.

Reports from department chairmen notwithstanding, most of the final examinations submitted to the Study were objective in character, with the great majority of the questions involving no more than rote memory. Often they seemed to test knowledge too superficial to be of any use to the student in future years, as illustrated by the following:

> William Shakespeare was the supreme writer of the Elizabethan Period because (a) he tells the actual story of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, (b) he writes of the conquests of England in the New World, (c) he writes of the problems of the throne and

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[2] Benjamin Bloom and David Krathwohl, eds., *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. Book I: Cognitive Domain. Book II: Affective Domain. (New York, David McKay Co., Inc., 1956 and 1964).

> the tragedy of Elizabeth's personal life, (d) he has the ability to make real the human characters of the Elizabethan period in the actions of daily life.

Obviously, the teacher intended the students to select (d), but the only correct answer is not printed in the text: "(e) none of these." Only a student half-knowledgeable about Shakespeare and English literature could feel satisfied in selecting (d). A good student must have been perplexed and probably felt that somehow his knowledge of Shakespeare had been faulty all along. Choices (a), (b), and (c) reveal the teacher's poverty of imagination in designing plausible but incorrect alternatives and affording some discrimination among the degrees of ignorance of the students. Even had answer (d) been an accurate statement of the reasons for Shakespeare's preeminence, the item would have been relatively worthless because of the ineffectiveness of the alternatives provided.

Still another type of objective question is inadequate because of grammatical or stylistic flaws:

> A quatrain is (a) six lines, (b) eight lines, (c) four lines, (d) two lines.

No quatrain *is* four lines. It is four lines *long*, or *has* four lines, or is characteristically a four-line *stanza*. Such a comment may seem picky, but a student who will in the same examination be tested on his usage of the English language ought at least to have the benefit of good example.

Questions also may test items and knowledge that are irrelevant:

> The name of Jason's ship was (a) Argo, (b) Argue, (c) Argos.

Perhaps questions of this sort reflect the discipline that English demands of its students but, if so, ought to be used sparingly. Why would one, however, ask the following question?

The chief motive for reading fiction today is that it:
- (a) helps pass the time
- (b) permits the reader to examine his own life from different points of view
- (c) enables the reader to see his own problems are relatively unimportant
- (d) forces the reader to think about problems.

In effect this teacher has asked his students a question so basic to English that it might be paralleled only by such questions as "Why do we study geometry?" The answer should become apparent through day to day work and cannot be tested in a single examination question as if it were an item from a lecture entitled "Why Literature?"

Better questions take what a student has learned and test his ability to use and apply it. A rather uninspired question might ask simply "Who wrote 'The Man with the Hoe'?" But in a more effective form it reads:

> The writer who best portrayed the hardships of farm life was (a) Samuel Clemens, (b) William Dean Howells, (c) Edwin Markham.

Similarly, another question from an examination submitted to the project staff tests a student's practical application of metaphor rather than his ability to name the poetic device used in a line of poetry. The teacher asks the student to choose the line that best completes the figure of speech:

Better to drink life in one flaming hour
And reel across the sun,
____
Before oblivion.

1. Than sip pale years and cower
2. Than climb great heights and tower
3. Than eat dry crumbs and cower
4. Than seek bright lights and power

Here the alternatives "eat dry crumbs" and "sip pale years" allow some discrimination in evaluating the refinement of a student's conception of the consistency of metaphor, and any errors would indicate quite clearly to the teacher that he should try to improve his teaching of figures of speech next time around. When students are forced to make larger discriminations—to select a "best" stanza of poetry, for example—the teacher has no way of knowing what influenced the student's decision and hence has provided himself with no effective measure of the success of his teaching.

Multiple choice questions *are* worthwhile and can be used effectively to evaluate what students have learned; but questions of the sort which simply test, item after item, the student's recall of what he heard in class or of what the introduction to a particular poem said seem quite useless—miss the point of English as a subject in which one "learns about other people." The following examples exemplify some of the better attempts to evaluate the students' learning and competence in English:

> *Snow-Bound* is an *idyll* because (1) it describes a pastoral scene, (2) it states the ideals of democracy, (3) it is written in an elegant style, (4) it describes legendary characters.

> Davis [from "In the Zone"]: He bends down and reaches out his hand sort o' scared-like, like it was somethin' dang'rous he was after, an' feels round in under his duds—hidden in under his duds an' wrapped up in 'em it was—an' he brings out a black iron box! [Lines spoken] (a) with an air of sinister mystery, (b) with great fear, (c) with marked indignation, (d) with great deliberation.

A. My husband likes golf better than I.
B. My husband likes golf better than me.
Which might cause a serious argument?

A. A clever dog knows it's master.
B. A clever dog knows its master.
In which case does the dog have the upper paw?

A. Do not break your bread or roll in your soup.
B. Do not break your bread, or roll in your soup.
Both show bad manners, but which is harder to do?

A. Everyone I know has a secret ambition.
B. Everyone, I know, has a secret ambition.
In which has the speaker pried into the private life of his friends?

DUNCAN: Dismayed not this
Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?
SERGEANT: Yes;
As sparrows eagles, or the hare the lion.
(sc. ii, Act I)

The sergeant means that:
A. Macbeth and Banquo were greatly dismayed by the new assault, like timid sparrows or hares.
B. The new assault dismayed Macbeth and Banquo no more than sparrows dismay eagles or the hare the lion.
C. Macbeth and Banquo fought desperately, like sparrows against eagles or hares against lions.

In general it may be stated that the exceptionally able teachers identified by project observers were also the teachers who demanded of their students responses that rose above mere rote learning. To this extent at least the teachers were consistent; if classes tended to deal superficially with literature, to rely on drill and memorization in all phases of English instruction, so too did the examinations. When classes were exciting and intellectually honest exchanges occurred among students and teachers, the examinations were more apt to be as creatively instructive as the punctuation questions given above.

The examinations involving fill-in questions displayed a similar spectrum of pertinence in evaluating student understanding of what has been read, with perhaps some shift toward the darker end. Indeed, one must be quite skillful if he is to design a question which requires one word for an answer—a word that becomes obvious to the conscientious student by thinking through the content and context of the question. For instance, the question "Hamlet is a ________." has almost innumerable answers, limited only by one's powers of imagination and perception, but more specifically, perhaps, by the word that occurs in a student's class notes. Similarly, the question, "All English is divided into two main categories, ________ and ________," will leave real doubts in anyone's mind, although one should reasonably expect to arrive at the proper answer to a fill-in question without having attended the class in question. Again there is little difference between the flat multiple choice questions described above and the following:

> The greatest Shakespearian dramatist is ________.
> He wrote three kinds of drama, ________, ________, and ________.
> An illustration of each kind is ________, ________, and ________.
> The dates of his life are ________.
> The three greatest personal elegies are ________ by ________, and ________ by ________, and ________ by ________.

Is the first question a gift? Did the teacher intend to say Elizabethan instead of Shakespearian? Or is the word "Shakespearian" a confuser?

For the most part, the fill-in answer does not seem effective for testing anything but rote learning. Even in the more discriminating multiple choice questions the optional answers almost uniformly were composed of more than one word, and this continuum leads, of course, to the essay answer, a testing technique open to all of the uses and abuses already noted with other kinds of examination questions.

Some essay questions submitted were neutral, leading to either very ingenious or very flat answers: "In your own words tell the story of *Beowulf*" can be a good or bad question depending on the student. Others were singularly poor:

> Give the historical facts of the medieval period.
>
> Trace the growth of American literature from its beginning to the present day. Use examples to support your statement.

> Literature is a reflection of the people and the time. Discuss this idea as it pertains to American literature. Be specific.
>
> Discuss the development of the novel. In what century was the first real novel written? What conditions made this particular time ripe for such writing? How did the trend in purpose and mode change as it progressed from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth to the twentieth?
>
> Show that you have definite knowledge of the Holy Grail.
>
> In a discussion of approximately 150 words evaluate the movies, radio, and television as entertainment and informational media. Mention the strengths and weaknesses of each and give particular attention to their suitability for the presentation of drama as compared to the stage.

Within the limits of time and memory such questions are impossible—they demand too much information and lead to shoddy thinking, cliché-ridden writing, and an unfortunate dependence on secondary sources.

It must be admitted that better essay questions were found on honors and advanced placement examinations, and yet there is no reason that such questions could not be modified for general classes. These advanced placement exams were characterized by very specific instructions with most of the *materials* for the answer present in the question. The only ingredient left out was the student's ideas and critical abilities. In an examination which gave the student the option of three out of five questions, one effective question read as follows:

> "The criteria for judging the interpretation of any poem are two: (1) A correct interpretation, if the poem is a successful one, must be able to account satisfactorily for any detail of the poem. . . . It must fully explain the details of the poem without itself being contradicted by any detail; (2) If more than one interpretation satisfactorily accounts for all the details of the poem, the best is that which is most economical, i.e., which relies on the fewest assumptions not grounded in the poem itself." *English Journal*, September 1962, pp. 393–394.

Below is a short poem by Emily Dickinson. It is commonly given one or the other of two different interpretations, each based on a different assumption. The two assumptions are these:

(a) The poem is descriptive of a garden or meadow scene.
(b) The poem is descriptive of a sunset.

Using the criteria above, make as good a case as you can for an interpretation of the poem below, based upon one of the assumptions (a or b).

Where ships of purple gently toss
On seas of daffodils,
Fantastic sailors mingle
And then—the wharf is still.
—Emily Dickinson

Another examination for a tenth grade class was organized about a poem:

I. Analyze the following characters using the line opposite each name as a point of departure.

II. Discuss the meaning of the poem.

What happens to a dream deferred?	Paul—in *Paul's Case*
Does it dry up	
Like a raisin in the sun?	*Miss Brill*
Or fester like a sore—	
And then run?	The looney in *How Beautiful with Shoes*
Does it stink like rotten meat?	Sushka—*The Little Angel*
Or crust and sugar over—	Sponono—*Tales from a Troubled Land*
Like a syrupy sweet?	
Maybe it just sags	The Umfundisi in *Cry, the Beloved Country*
Like a heavy load	
Or does it explode?	
Langston Hughes[3]	

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[3] From THE PANTHER AND THE LASH, by Langston Hughes. © Copyright 1967 by Langston Hughes. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

Such questions are more specific and differ from most essay questions in that they do not demand the encyclopedic knowledge that can reasonably be expected only of a doctoral candidate in English taking his written preliminary examinations. Some examinations are made even more difficult through additional requirements:

> Think through carefully the development of American poetry as exemplified by the following authors: Longfellow, Lowell, Whitman, Dickinson, Frost, and Sandburg. Organize your thoughts and then select four of the poets and write an essay showing the contribution which each author made. Be specific.
>
> In writing the essay make a special effort to use gerunds, infinitives, and participles. Underline these as they appear in your work. The quality of your writing is more important than the length of your essay. First make an outline and then organize your thinking from the items in the outline. Sentence structure, grammar, punctuation, and vocabulary will all be considered in the grading.

In some ways, the attempt to test both literature and composition is commendable, but the special reference to use of gerunds, infinitives, and participles must remain somewhat suspect, even had the students just finished studying them.

The testing of composition skills has always been a problem for teachers. Surely, questions which ask students to identify sentences as simple, complex, compound, and compound-complex are of minimal value, but others have been devised with a good deal of success.

Testing a student's knowledge of total composition structure is an even more difficult matter. Some possible solutions taken from tests are given here:

> Rate the following thesis statements (1–5) from best to poorest. Comment giving reasons for your choices.

1. Although no one is perfect, Chaucer presents the parson as a perfect minister in thought, word, and deed. The parson was a true Christian and always lived by the Word of God.

2. The parson was a good man from the church, as well as wise and smart.

3. A nun is a woman who retires from the everyday world, and devotes herself to religion. In comparing the early day nun to the prioress, one finds that Madame Eglantine is a completely different kind of woman than one expects a nun to be.

4. In the "Canterbury Tales," Chaucer portrays Hubert, the friar, as a beggar friar who is interested only in his own wealth and not in being a servant of the common people, as most friars of his day were.

5. Atticus Finch is a well known and liked lawyer in a small town called Maycomb, in Northern Alabama.

or:

Below you will find a group of numbered sentences out of coherent order which makes up a unified paragraph when they are arranged in logical sequence. After reading the sentences, arrange them in order so that the revised sequence makes up the proper order. After you have decided on the correct arrangement, write the numbers in the blanks provided and answer the questions that follow:

1. The rising importance of Leeds has attracted the notice of successive governments.

2. In 1841 there were more than a hundred and fifty thousand souls.

3. They boasted loudly of their increasing wealth and of the immense sale of cloth which took place in the open air on the bridge.

4. But from the returns of the hearth-money it seems certain that the whole population of the borough, an extensive district which

contains many hamlets, did not, in the reign of Charles II, exceed seven thousand souls.

5. Leeds was already the chief seat of the woollen manufacturers of Yorkshire, but the elderly inhabitants could still remember the time when the first brick house then and long after called the Red House was built.
6. Oliver Cromwell had invited it to send one member to the House of Commons.
7. Charles the First had granted municipal privileges to the town.
8. Hundreds, nay, thousands of pounds have been paid down in the course of one busy day.

Questions:

1. The best logical order of arrangement is ________________.
2. The sentence above which can best serve as the summary sentence of the paragraph is ________________.
3. An appropriate title for the paragraph might be ____________ ________________.

Yet most of the testing of composition and language degenerates into questions on usage, spelling, vocabulary, and the like. Part of the reason for these shortcomings may be that what is tested *is* what is taught. Surely, the evaluation of student achievement in language and composition will become adequate only when the teaching in those areas becomes more realistic.

It was noted above that the advanced placement and the honors examinations seem generally better than those at other levels. Yet that observation might be invalidated if it were found that the advanced placement teachers tend generally to be the best in the school, that the questions appeal more to the sophisticated observer, or that the questions seem to be asked on works that are of more marked literary value.

But the advanced placement teacher quite often taught three general sections as well. The impression remained that if one were to look at all of the examinations given by these teachers, he would find the examination for the general class more traditional than the one for the honors group, even though sometimes the students cover material of comparable literary interest, albeit on a more limited scale. One argument in favor of the traditional examination, however, may be that the general classes are a good deal larger, thus making it impossible for student-teacher interaction to progress to the point where the thoughtful essay examination will be fruitful, or even practical.

The second objection is more difficult to answer. A question requiring some type of literary analysis may well appeal to a person fond of English as a humanistic study. And yet, as an alternative to "Hamlet is a ______________," one can appreciate the reasons for its favor. In some ways the discrepancy evident in the two types of examinations results from different conceptions of the courses for the general and the advanced student. The honors or advanced placement student seems to be given the opportunity to experience what many literary specialists hope English means: the development of insight into how a work of literature operates and creates its effect—into how a poem means. Advanced students seem to be introduced to the *facts* of literary history only when these facts seem relevant to such insights. With the general, terminal, or even regular college bound student, however, literature is introduced as if it were history. How the particular work of literature might operate is swallowed up in a supposed demand to cover American or British literature, to give the student that all-important familiarity with the whole spectrum of great literature. The result, unfortunately, is too often a cultural literary cram course in which the student battles with a sea of authors, dates, and titles which somehow must be assimilated before he leaves school. When examination time arrives, the students are simply to continue what they have been doing all year: the honors student *thinks*, while his less gifted peers regurgitate. Yet, surely, if these names and dates were all that make up English, the old saw that every and any teacher is an English teacher could quite easily be corroborated.

The third objection, that the literary works used in the advanced placement exams might have made the questions seem more appealing because of the higher literary quality of the works, is also not valid. The general classes are in fact introduced to *Hamlet*. They are in fact introduced to Milton, to Keats, to Tennyson, to Austen (although some of these authors may not be introduced to the slower classes, for reasons that are here accepted as quite valid). But, as has been indicated above, what happens to these authors in the classroom and in the examination is something quite different from what happens in the advanced classes. Indeed, there would perhaps be little wrong with the substitution of works of lesser literary value but more appeal to the student if the result were to be more attention to how the work operates and less to its place in literary history. If insight into such essentials as tone, characterization, setting, mood, and diction is not present, then the experience can be of little value to the student—the inherent "greatness" of the work under study notwithstanding.

Summary

In too few of the school programs investigated by the National Study has adequate thought been given to using final or end-of-the-term examinations as an effective way of assessing student learning in English. Among the problems deserving priority in developing a sound program of evaluation are the comprehensiveness of examinations in relation to the purpose of the program, the use of examinations as a measure of the effectiveness of the program, and the writing of test questions. A consideration of such examinations by all English teachers in a school would direct careful attention to the ends of instruction. Above all, department chairmen need to realize that many existing examinations provide neither an adequate assessment of student learning in English nor an indication of instructional effectiveness.

CHAPTER 10

The Library and the Student

One of the primary assumptions at the beginning of the National Study was that, in schools achieving important results in English, books would be readily available and widely used. Staff investigators confidently expected to find not only adequate libraries but also well-stocked classroom book collections; these expectations proved to be unfounded. Perhaps foolishly, investigators had hoped too that students would be carrying library or paperback books from class to class, but again it was anthologies that were more in evidence. (Some anthologies are so heavy that they precluded the possibility of students carrying other books.) When students did want other books for school or personal reading, it was not to the school library that they went to supply their needs.

Yet the findings of the National Study in no way suggest that the students in these schools are not reading widely and well. What the investigators did discover, however, was that neither the school library nor supplementary book collections are exercising appreciable influence on the reading that students do.

General Characteristics of School Libraries

In 1960, the American Library Association published certain standards for libraries in secondary schools and appended the qualification: "It would be untrue to state that very many schools now meet or exceed all the quantitative standards noted for school libraries in this publication." [1] Data collected during

[1] American Library Association, *Standards for School Libraries* (Chicago, Ill., American Library Association, 1960). Although purposely high

the National Study indicate that the situation is little better today: only 2 of the 104 schools in which libraries were studied intensively met any three of the six standards proposed; 61 met none at all.

Table 10, which compares ALA standards for a library in a school with the mean population of 1,797 found in the Study with the characteristics of libraries in the Study, indicates just how far these libraries fall short. Selected data available from NCTE's national survey,[2] however, indicate that conditions in these schools are better than those found nationally. At least 0.9 more books per pupil are provided by Study schools, which also spend $.43 more per pupil each year. When teachers were asked to indicate whether they recommended that their students use the school library, the importance of the per capita collection,

Table 10

Characteristics of School Libraries

(n = 104 libraries)

Characteristic	*Study Schools*	*ALA Standard for a School Library Serving 1,797 Students*
Number of Books per Student	6.9	10
Number of Librarians	1.7	5
Number of Library Clerks	1.0	3
Number of Seats for Students	116	180
Annual per Capita Expenditure	$2.28	$4.00–6.00
Number of Magazines	81.8	120

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so as to serve as goals as well as standards, the ALA criteria have been endorsed by other scholarly and professional groups, including NCTE.

[2] Committee on National Interest, *The National Interest and the Teaching of English* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1961), p. 102.

which in turn is related to expenditures, became apparent. Some 80 percent of the teachers from the ten schools with the highest per capita holdings did indeed make such suggestions, compared with only 57 percent of those from the ten schools with the lowest per capita holdings. As all teachers have a vested interest in the quality and extent of student reading, the implications are obvious.

Accessibility of Libraries

A library may have an excellent collection, but if it is not accessible to students it can be of little value. Happily, in Study schools over half of the libraries kept all of their books on open shelves, and only one had less than 90 percent of its collection readily available. There remains the problem, however, of when the student has time to use the facilities. Librarians object to the added burdens placed on the library staff when the library is used as a study hall, and indeed only eighteen of the schools follow this practice. In other cases students usually must obtain a pass of some kind from their regular classes whenever they wish to use the library. Still, in schools where students are carrying increasingly heavy schedules or are bussed into and out of school at the first and last bell, the library study hall may provide the only regular opportunity for students to explore and use the library. It was found, for example, that in schools where the library served as a study hall an average of ten more students used it during a typical period than during an equivalent period in other schools.

With increasing course requirements and more extensive programs, however, any form of study hall may be rare for the academic student. Access to the library before or after school thus becomes increasingly important. Although the average library in the Study is open almost 450 minutes a day, less than 17 percent of this time falls in the periods before and after school, when *all* students are free to use it. It was encouraging to find that twenty libraries were open for forty-five minutes or more before school, and ten for at least an hour and a half after classes were over, but these schools were still in the minority.

It was also unfortunate to find that the suburban schools, where bus transportation schedules prevent students from arriving early or remaining late, were the very institutions most likely to decrease assigned study halls for their academic students. The few schools with independent study programs may have found one workable solution, but in the rest the increasing demands on the better students only compound the problem of access to the library. A few librarians have tried to keep their libraries open during the evening or during lunch periods, but they can report only mixed success. Both approaches created problems when libraries were located on second or third floor levels without outside entrances, which meant the whole section of the building had to be opened whenever the library was used. It was clear to observers that new library schedules and physical arrangements are mandatory if students are ever to have easy access to collections.

To most observers, libraries in Study schools seemed neither outstanding nor completely inadequate. When asked to rate school libraries on a seven point scale ranging from "accessible library, well-stocked with good books," to "meager library, or one inaccessible to students," 60 percent of their ratings fell in the three middle categories. That this mediocrity is not good enough is made clear in the discussion of library use in the next section of this report.

Student Use of Libraries

To assess student use of school and public libraries, as well as to study personal reading habits, the project staff constructed a special reading questionnaire. Selected questions from a study of library use conducted by Lowell A. Martin at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore were incorporated to provide some comparative data.[3] In each of the 116 schools visited by project observers, six teachers were asked to present the reading questionnaire to one of their classes. The resulting 16,089 usable

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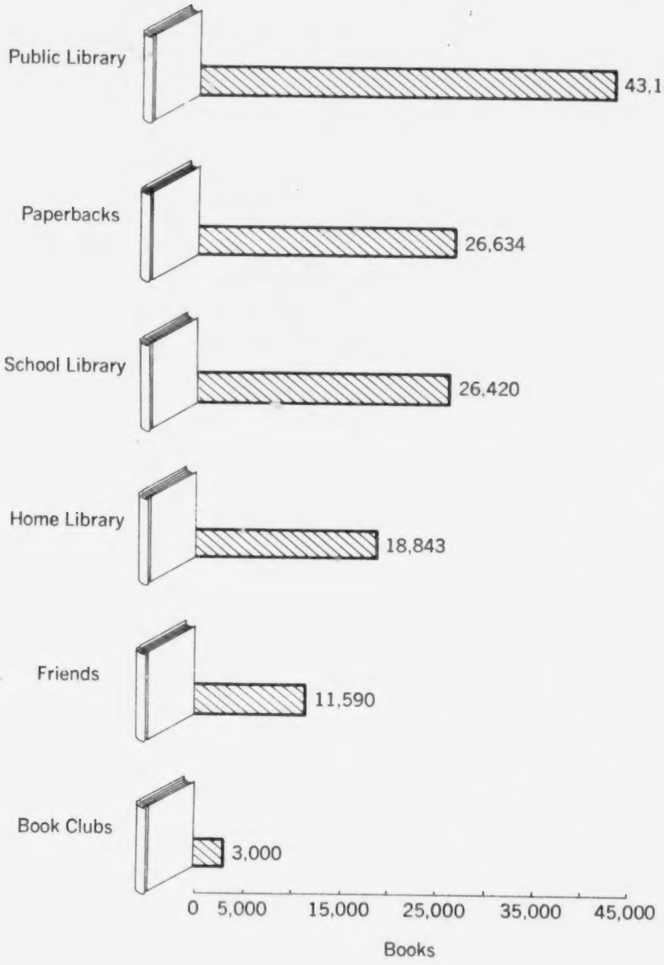
[3] Lowell A. Martin, *Students and the Pratt Library: Challenge and Opportunity* (Baltimore, Md., Enoch Pratt Free Library, July 1963).

Figure 12 Sources of Student Books During Month Preceding Survey



questionnaires equally represented college preparatory and noncollege classes at all grade levels.

An astounding 127,629 books had been obtained by students during the month before they were surveyed, an average of almost 8 books per student. More of these books were borrowed from public libraries than came from any other source, but the resources reported in Figure 12 were far broader than those Martin found. Together, public and school libraries accounted for only 54 percent of the titles obtained, far less than the 82 percent Martin reported, and inexpensive paperbacks emerge for the first time as one of the most important sources of student reading materials.

Despite the clear preference for the public library as a source of books, more individual students actually used the school library than used any other source. This may result in part because 17 percent of the schools do use their libraries for study halls. When the data were divided according to frequency of use, figures for school and public libraries were nearly identical in all but the extreme cases which would in fact be those most affected by required study halls or inaccessibility. The percentages reported in the National Study were also close to those from the Martin study in all but the extreme categories.[4]

More useful, perhaps, are direct expressions of dissatisfaction with library collections. Only 47.7 percent of the students thought the school library had all the books they usually needed for school, and even fewer, a mere 26.6 percent, felt the school had all the books they liked to read for pleasure. These figures are again comparable with the Pratt Library findings, where the percent of students objecting to school book collections ranged from 49.3 to 59.4 percent. When asked which library they preferred to use, over two thirds of the students in the present Study chose the public library. The summary in Table 11 of the reasons students gave for this choice makes it clear that the quality of the book collection is here the essential factor. In almost every case,

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[4] Detailed data on this and other aspects of student reading are included in Appendix D.

Table 11

Advantages of School Libraries and of Public Libraries

Reasons for Preferring School Library

(n = 4,159 students)

Rank	*Reason*	*Number*
1	More convenient	2,420
2	Easier to locate books	288
3	More familiar with school literature	163
4	No public library	38
5	Books are simpler	37
6	No card at public library	7
	No specific reason	1,206

Reasons for Preferring Public Library

(n = 10,931 students)

Rank	*Reason*	*Number*
1	Greater and better book collections	7,674
2	Stays open longer	502
3	Convenient	366
4	Better reference materials	278
5	Librarians aren't so strict	249
6	Quieter	187
7	More comfortable	136
8	Not familiar with school library	106
9	Better organized	64
10	More space	56
11	Facilities for music with study	9
12	Lighter, gayer books	2
	No specific reason	1,302

those who preferred the school library did so because of factors extrinsic to the collections themselves. That convenience should be an important factor in the use of school libraries is quite to be expected, but it is rather startling to find that these factors also rank high among reasons for using the public library: observers' reports of inaccessible school collections were well founded.

If additional evidence is needed to demonstrate that the size of the school book collection affects student use, it can be found by comparing library use in schools with large collections with use in those with small ones. In the ten schools with the largest per capita holdings, only 8 percent of the students indicated they had not used the library during the previous month, a figure which compares with 28 percent in the ten schools with the lowest per capita book collections. Conversely, in the schools with good collections 45 percent of the students had used their libraries more than five times during the previous month; only 16 percent of the student body in the schools with poor libraries had used them that much. The students' confidence in the adequacy of the library also varied directly with the size of the collection; more than half of the students in the schools with large per capita collections reported that the libraries had most of the books needed for schoolwork, compared with only 16 percent in the schools with smaller collections. However, less than 30 percent of the students approve of the libraries for personal reading selections even in schools with large collections.

Clearly, then, the school libraries claim very little allegiance from their students; even the best are considered inadequate for all reading purposes by the majority of students. Moreover, responses also indicate that interest in the school library declines and use of the public library increases throughout the high school years. Some 31 percent of all tenth graders in the Study had not used the public library during the preceding month, a figure that drops to 16 percent by grade twelve. Over the same period, reliance on the school library for personal reading declines from 31 percent to 26 percent. Finally, the responses of advanced twelfth grade students indicated that 83 percent relied on the public library as a major source of books, and only 55 percent relied on the school library. Partially these trends reflect the maturity and widening interests of the older students; partially they can be traced to the feeling that "the librarians aren't so strict," a reason advanced by 43 percent of the tenth graders and 51 percent of the twelfth grade students in separate group meetings. However, the lack of restriction in public libraries may be less a factor than the accessibility of good collections. Partially, too, student use of either school or public libraries may reflect teacher recommendations. A correlation of data from the teacher questionnaire with the responses of students showed that, when teachers actively call attention to the school library, the percentage of students using it increases slightly, from 60 percent to 62 percent. When teachers recommend the public library, the percentage of students reporting frequent use increases by 7 percentage points, and when they suggest paperbacks, some 14 percent more of the students report frequent use of such titles.

The Scope of the Library Collection

However many factors may contribute to the rejection by students of school libraries, at least for personal reading, clearly the primary one is the low degree of selectivity in the collections. This problem is illustrated by studies of both periodical and book collections made during the course of each school visit.

In interviews with librarians, staff members obtained lists of the periodicals to which the schools regularly subscribe; students in the same schools were also asked to indicate the magazines and periodicals they regularly read. The results, summarized in Table 12, demonstrate not only the insatiable interests of the teenagers in the Study, but also the absence of any close correlation between magazines available in school libraries and those regularly read by students. The one magazine found in almost all of the libraries, *Saturday Review*, ranks only twenty-seventh among the preferences of adolescents. *Post, Life, Newsweek, Atlantic Monthly*, and *Harper's* are available in nearly equal numbers, but, although the first three rate high among student choices, the others were mentioned by less than 1 percent of the students reporting. Perhaps of more importance, however, are the number of popular and highly regarded magazines which many school libraries do not receive. *Seventeen*, ranked fifth by students, is missing from 20 percent of the libraries; *Look*, ranked fourth, from even more. *Hot Rod, Sports*, and *Ingenue*, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth in student popularity, are missing from over half of the collections, the last two from three fourths or

Table 12

The Fifteen Most Popular and the Fifteen Most Available Magazines

Libraries (n = 91)			*Students (n = 15,874)*		
Periodical	*Percent Sub-scribing*	*Rank among Student Preferences**	*Periodical*	*Percent Sub-scribing*	*Rank among Student Preferences**
Saturday Review	99	27	Life	92	1
Reader's Digest	98	6	Post	93	2
U.S. News & World			Time	95	3
Report	97	12	Look	79	4
Newsweek	97	7	Seventeen	80	5
Science Digest	96	–	Reader's Digest	98	6
National Geographic	96	9	Newsweek	97	7
Time	95	4	McCalls	55	8
Popular Mechanics	93	26	Sports Illustrated	90	9
Scientific American	93	24	National Geographic	96	10
Post	93	2	Hot Rod	48	11
Life	92	1	Sports	25	12
Atlantic Monthly	91	–	Ingenue	12	13
Harper's	91	–	Ladies Home Journal	73	14
Sports Illustrated	90	10	Playboy	0	15
Popular Science	90	19			

*Only magazines noted by over 1 percent of the students are ranked.

more. While librarians may be justified in excluding a magazine like *Playboy*, whatever its popularity, the exclusion of specialized magazines created especially for adolescents is highly questionable. Because they must be of particular interest to nonacademic students, there is a place for periodicals like *Hi-Fi*, *Western Horseman*, *Electronics World*, *Road and Track*, and perhaps with some student populations *Surf Guide*. No one will argue that the absence of such magazines keeps students from important literary experiences, but such omissions may indeed contribute to the lack of any interest in the library at all.

Teachers report separately that, except for local newspapers (37.8 percent), the periodicals most frequently introduced in regular English classrooms are *Atlantic Monthly* (32.7 percent), *Reader's Digest* (32.5 percent), *Harper's* (25.8 percent), and *Practical English* (24.3 percent). These findings, when viewed in relation to student preferences, suggest that, while teachers wisely spend little time "teaching" *Life*, *Look*, and other popular journals, they may spend too much time as it is on the *Reader's Digest*, considering that it is already the sixth most frequently read magazine. But it does seem discouraging that class time spent on more thoughtful periodicals like *Harper's* and *Atlantic Monthly* seems to have had little effect on reading preferences. Actually, *Mad* magazine accounted for forty more readers than either of the two last named periodicals.

Even more disturbing than the problems of selectivity in periodical collections is the uncertain quality of the book collections in even the better English programs in the Study. Concern about the adequacy of the school library as a source of books for personal reading led the project staff to develop a check list of fifty titles as one method of assessing the nature of the collections. This list was based on titles which gifted college students in a recent study by Whitman had recalled as their most memorable high school reading experiences.[5] To these titles were added the names of a few mature books, some of which (like some on the Whitman list) had often been questioned as appropriate for reading by high school students. The findings for eighty-four of the Study's schools are presented in Table 13.

Not surprising, perhaps, is that the one book mentioned as most significant by the gifted students in the Whitman survey, Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, could be found in only 50 percent of the school libraries. *Exodus*, the number two reading choice of the students, was available in 83 percent; *The Ugly American*, number three, in 75 percent; *Look Homeward, Angel*, number four, in 80 percent. The books found in all or almost all of the libraries were standard "classics" of school reading: *The Scarlet Letter*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *The Return of the Native*, *Wuthering Heights*. These must and should be present, of course, even when

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[5] Robert S. Whitman, "Significant Reading Experiences of Superior English Students," *Illinois English Bulletin*, 51 (February 1964).

Table 13

Availability of Selected Titles in School Libraries

(n = 84 school libraries)

Title	*Percent of Libraries with Title*	*Title*	*Percent of Libraries with Title*
The Scarlet Letter	100	1984	85
A Tale of Two Cities	100	Dr. Zhivago	83
The Return of the Native	99	Exodus	83
Wuthering Heights	99	The Wall	83
Gone with the Wind	98	Advise and Consent	80
The Good Earth	98	Look Homeward, Angel	80
Jane Eyre	98	The Grapes of Wrath	75
Of Human Bondage	98	The Ugly American	75
The Old Man and the Sea	98	An American Tragedy	74
War and Peace	98	Brave New World	69
The Forsyte Saga	96	Heart of Darkness	68
Les Misérables	96	The Once and Future King	65
Moby Dick	96	A Death in the Family	61
The Pilgrim's Progress	96	Lord of the Flies	54
Vanity Fair	96	The Magic Mountain	52
Babbitt	95	You Can't Go Home Again	52
Ben Hur	95	The Sound and the Fury	51
Cry, the Beloved Country	94	The Catcher in the Rye	50
Pride and Prejudice	93	The Razor's Edge	49
Animal Farm	92	Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man	46
Anna Karenina	92	Franny and Zooey	37
To Kill a Mockingbird	92	The Stranger	26
Crime and Punishment	89	The Fountainhead	23
The Way of All Flesh	88	Atlas Shrugged	12
Brothers Karamazov	87	Generation of Vipers	10

they rank low in the memories of able student readers. Project observers frequently wished more librarians would spend a portion of their budgets to purchase attractive new editions of some of these standard texts, rather than place shopworn, tattered, sometimes poorly printed copies alongside crisp and inviting new novels of considerably inferior quality. What is most disturbing, however, is to find that no more than half of the libraries make available such modern works as *The Sound and the Fury*, *The Razor's Edge* (ranked sixth by students in the Whitman study), *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (ranked eighth by students), *Franny and Zooey* (seventh), or Camus' *The Stranger*. In one school a staff member found six books about William Faulkner and not one book written by him!

The teachers and usually the librarians in these schools claim that they are either "completely free" or "free but subject to the approval of the department head" to select reading materials for the students. Yet one wonders how much responsible selection is actually being practiced. The majority of English teachers prefer to have their students seek books to read from the school library (65.8 percent) rather than from the public library (12.5 percent) or elsewhere. Why? Because it is safer? The findings emerging from this Study suggest two spheres of reading for young people—the acceptable, safe books read in the school library, and the preferred titles (sometimes of higher literary quality) found in the public library and read at home.[6] Perhaps this is as it should be. But one wonders how students will acquire the help and guidance necessary to read Faulkner and Joyce and other major modern writers with the sensitivity they require. Schools and teachers talk much of transmitting our common cultural heritage to the student, yet this heritage is singular indeed if it is not to include the vigorous realistic tradition of the twentieth century.

Summary

Wide reading of many kinds of books is characteristic of students in the schools embraced by the National Study. Library conditions in these schools, if not satisfactory by national standards established by the American Library Association, are considerably better than in the typical American high school. Nevertheless, the school librarian does not seem to reach the students, who repeatedly state a preference for the public library, especially for personal reading. Special studies in selected schools indicate that careless or highly restrictive selections of books and magazines may partially explain such attitudes, as may the relative size of the school collection. Teachers are inclined, moreover, to urge use of the school library if the book collection is of respectable size, and their recommendations (whether of paperbacks or of public or school libraries) are usually heeded.

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[6] See further discussion of reading preferences in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 11

High Schools in Metropolitan Centers

For at least a decade, the particular problems of school systems in metropolitan centers have been dramatized by such issues as integration, rising costs, and dissatisfied personnel. Although in the past, teachers might be employed only after a kind of apprenticeship in smaller towns and suburbs, no such regime is possible today. Old patterns have reversed, with many teachers now beginning in larger city districts and moving later to more affluent and more favored suburban systems. Such problems of the city school system formed a special phase of the National Study.

But what exactly is a "metropolitan center"? How do its size and multiplicity affect the English program? The first question can be answered arbitrarily; the second is the subject of this chapter.

For purposes of analysis and discussion, all cities over 200,000 were grouped together and their schools considered to be from urban or metropolitan areas. Because it seemed that the size of the city would have some relationship to the number, and to some extent the size, of the high schools, as well as to the complexity of educational organization, subgroups of this sample were also analyzed; these consisted of schools from cities with populations between 200,000 and 500,000, between 500,000 and 1 million, and of 1 million and over. Because there were only two schools in the original Study which fell into this third category, the project staff obtained a supplementary grant from the U.S. Office of Education to allow additional visits to schools of this size. The city superintendent, or his designate, selected schools in the supplementary group, the only criterion from the project office being that the school should be comprehensive and composed of students representing a broad spectrum of cultural and intellectual backgrounds. But the requests did indicate the interest of the project staff in visiting particularly impressive English programs. More often than not, in the opinion of the project's observers, the city's better comprehensive schools were chosen.

Characteristics of the Schools

There is great variety among the thirty-one metropolitan high schools. They are of different sizes; they are found in every corner of the country; they receive a wide range of financial support (from less than $300 per pupil to more than $700); they send anywhere from 15 to 90 percent of their graduates to college; their "dropout quotient" varies from 60 percent to almost nil. Observers report the quality of English instruction in these schools ranges from among the best to the very worst in the entire Study.

Perhaps the most revealing statistic, reflecting one of the most serious problems faced by city school systems, is the proportionately large number of dropouts from schools in this group. Whereas the average dropout figure in all of the cooperating high schools is 9 percent, in the urban schools it equaled 33 percent of tenth grade students. It should be remembered that figures represent a quotient useful for comparative purposes only.[1] If *all* dropouts from grades seven to twelve were counted, the proportions could very likely double—leaving the unhappy conjecture that many city high schools graduate a mere one third to one half of the students originally enrolled in grade seven.

[1] Firm statistics revealing high school dropouts are difficult to secure and, for several reasons, are not completely reliable. The quotient used for comparative purposes here is a simple arithmetic proportion:

$$\frac{\text{No. graduating students}}{\text{No. 10th grade students}} \times 100\% = \text{D.O.Q.}$$

Table 14 reveals that the highest dropout rate occurs not in the very largest cities but in the middle group. However, the very small sample used and the probability that those in the "A" group are not entirely representative make any generalization highly dubious. The open enrollment policy in New York City, where two of the seven schools are located, and special schools which tended to draw off the potential dropout as well as the academically talented student in some cities also affected the data. In general, however, if the figures in Table 14 were to be adjusted for any of these variables, they would have to be raised rather than lowered.

There is certainly no simple explanation for the high rate of student attrition in these schools. Migrant families, broken homes, recurring patterns of failure in earlier grades, and economic pressures all contribute to the problem; and it is clear that the schools involved in this Study were generally *not* those most affected by these pressures. Either chosen initially for their excellent reputations or later by district authorities who undoubtedly selected those that would reflect a favorable image, this group of schools could in no way be said to represent the "slum schools" of the country, those which would be most subject to

Table 14

Dropouts in City Schools

(n = 31 schools)

	Graduating Students	*Tenth Grade Students*	*D.O.Q.*
Group A (pop. 1 million or over) (n = 7 schools)	4,594	6,075	24.5%
Group B (pop. 500,000–999,000) (n = 12 schools)	5,255	8,983	41.4%
Group C (pop. 200,000–499,000) (n = 12 schools)	5,921	8,630	30.3%
Combined Total (31 schools)	15,770	23,688	33.5%

negative forces of external origin. Special studies by Conant, the NCTE Task Force on Language Programs for the Disadvantaged, and others have shown that the programs of such schools must be viewed from perspectives different from those available to the National Study of High School English Programs. Nevertheless, the project staff feels that group analysis of the city schools provides a useful contrast with the conditions that obtain in other areas.

In any business or political structure, multiplicity and size tend to generate uniformity and standardization, and the metropolitan school district is no exception. These factors affect the English program and the English classroom in numerous ways: there tend to be large classes, rigid scheduling, citywide curriculums, large-scale testing programs, district textbook committees, reading lists, examinations, building policies, personnel practices, and many other manifestations of the principle that multiplicity acquires order and economy through many details of organization. At its best, such comprehensiveness can lead to economies measurable in dollars saved or professional time conserved. At its worst, it generates inflexible systemization, frustrated teachers, and unmotivated students. One result has been that the typical city school in the Study must replace 16.5 percent of its staff each year. Statistically, however, it is difficult to characterize the sometimes subtle but often distinctive differences between teaching in a large urban district and teaching in a smaller town or educationally autonomous suburb. Some of the effects of the high degree of organization in large-city high schools were noted by observers:

> One is inevitably surprised and somewhat overwhelmed by the many onerous tokens of organization and regimentation: the time clocks which teachers must punch daily (in and out!), the *up* and *down* stairs, the uninspiring sameness of the classrooms, the uniform REGULATIONS posted about the buildings.
>
> . . . the program itself tends to be conservative and ordinary, necessarily reflecting the overall philosophy of the central office.

> Large classes, excessive and burdensome clerical duties impede the entire program.

> Despite very good things, I felt the school should be better. I saw superb teachers not relating to one another, a plethora of administrative regulations smothering the department, a school which could have ranked with the best suburban schools visited lacking fire and excitement.

Teaching loads in city high schools are appreciably higher than those found in any other group of schools except the Catholic; teachers have an average of 145 students, compared with 130 for all Study schools, while in only two of the thirty-one schools was the standard load less than five classes per day. The large majority of teachers had such additional assignments as study hall or locker duty along with the ubiquitous homeroom responsibility and paperwork that preempt time and energy. It was not uncommon for these schools to be operating from 25 to 50 percent over capacity, which resulted in teachers "floating" from room to room, even floor to floor, to take advantage of usable classroom space. In one particularly crowded school, for example, teachers spent their preparation periods sitting at chair desks in dimly lighted halls because no other space was available. Many city schools ran split or double sessions; still others depended on an available "annex" or "temporary" frame classroom unit, often constructed as much as twenty years earlier. The same conditions can of course arise in school systems of any size, but the important consideration is to what extent administrators and teachers are able to cope with such logistical problems and still carry on a viable educational program.

On the basis of individual and group interviews, there is no doubt that English teachers in urban schools feel the pressure of too many classes and too many students. Time and again, whether responding as a department or as individuals, they complained of not having enough time to teach properly—time to complete the required routines as well as to prepare meaningful lessons and to correct written assignments. Almost as common was an insistence that there were too many obstacles to teaching in the way of students summoned from their rooms, assemblies held at the expense of classes, intrusions by other departments, or inconsequential announcements over the public address system. Although such interruptions are often found in other kinds of schools, perhaps even to the same extent, morale is such that teachers in large-city schools are frequently more resentful and certainly more outspoken about them.

Individually, many city teachers decried the sometimes desperate physical state of the building or the classroom assigned them, and quite justifiably according to observers. Even more emphatically, those teachers who were forced to "float" from room to room complained that the practice not only alienated them but also interfered directly with the business of teaching—with their having books, bulletin boards, and other equipment at hand when they are most needed.[2]

Rather surprisingly, most English teachers did not resent the system of split or even double sessions as a temporary solution to the most serious problems of overcrowding. Indeed, although there are obvious administrative difficulties with offering more than a single session, it seems a wise alternative to crowding too many students and too many teachers within a single block of time. Faced with the choice a few years ago, the administrators of the Rincon High School in Tucson, Arizona, proceeded to plan a split session and hired additional teachers to do the job. Rather than use every available space to hold classes, they converted one classroom into an English department office, or, more descriptively, a department center, manned by a full-time secretary and provided with books, files, desks, and various other resources, materials, and equipment that a teacher might find useful. Generally speaking, all English classrooms are located in the same wing within easy range of the center and contain appropriate libraries and equipment. Thus there is a special room for English 11 or English 12 since, in the thinking of the department, these are discrete courses demanding their own periodicals and books. These practices have had a positive and pervasive effect on the program as a whole; carefully equipped English centers and specialized classrooms appear to be "promising practices" that schools in many parts of the country might consider, whether overcrowded or not.

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[2] In the course of the Study, observers have seen English classes conducted in drafting rooms, biology rooms, home economics centers, auditoriums, and cafeterias, to mention some of the more noteworthy problems of the "floating" practice. It is not that the project staff is unsympathetic with the problem of the overcrowded school; however, the point must be made that English, like other disciplines, requires its own resources in the way of books and materials. See also Chapter 4, "The English Department."

Another problem noted by many teachers was a lack of professional communication—as one teacher unconsciously put it, "During lunch we are able to talk." Although it is next to impossible to measure teacher morale with any certainty, observers indicated that there was a palpable difference evident in many city schools. A number of teachers interviewed expressed their frustration with and their distrust of "the downtown office." Many were also critical of the books and materials provided them and felt that the written curriculum simply did not fit the classes that they taught. They were similarly critical of the tracking or grouping of students in the English program, although they were almost without exception in favor of grouping; if students were only put on the right track with the right teachers, all would be well. It is of course not surprising that those who teach within highly organized systems should expect the wheels to turn so that they might teach with less restraint and more felicity. The fact that superorganization appears to leave many teachers dissatisfied casts a serious doubt on the efficiency of the complex educational structures in large districts. Observer comments are again revealing:

> . . . it had the "city school atmosphere"—one part education, one part social, and four parts system and impersonality.

> No student was observed carrying a library book or a paperback.

> The whole atmosphere here suggests systemization and prescription. This is not to say that there are not very able teachers here,

> but that the mold is somewhat limited—their professionalism is rather narrow too.

> Without the restraints imposed by the System, the overcrowding, and the heavy workload of teachers, I think the atmosphere would be better yet.

The issue of academic freedom is certainly too complex to be dealt with in its many facets in this report. The one dimension that can be analyzed here is the apparent freedom that teachers feel they have in choosing classroom materials or library books. But freedom is a relative and highly individual matter, and teachers who have taught in the same department for many years have responded to a question relating to the degree of freedom in choosing books, texts, records, and other materials with the entire range from "complete freedom" to "no choice." Several indicated in interviews that they had "considerable freedom" and then stated that this meant they could choose from among certain approved selections in an anthology. To the observers, such an attitude suggests that some teachers, at least, prefer to teach in a school where many choices have been made for them.

In most large cities rather elaborate machinery has been developed to produce "approved" book lists.[3] Aside from certain economies from central purchasing and wholesale discounts, this procedure is an effective deterrent to the use of "controversial" books in the classroom. That principals or English teachers in city systems are almost never pilloried because of class use of a questionable book is a measure of the success of the censoring effect of these book lists. Unfortunately, it is also an index to the constraints imposed on teachers who would like to depart somewhat from the always safe and sometimes puerile books they are asked to teach. To be sure, most schools allow teachers some opportunity to suggest books for adoption, but the judicial machinery to approve or not to approve can take a year or longer;

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[3] As noted in Chapter 4, this procedure is also practiced on a statewide basis in several areas.

and this process in itself is enough to induce conformity and restraint. Finally, the few suggestions which were given in response to direct questions about other books which might be taught suggest that the tight rein on book adoption may discourage teachers even from thinking about selections they might prefer to teach.

Rarely did metropolitan high schools provide room libraries where students might browse or select books for out-of-class reading. A notable exception was a school in a midwestern city which operates a modified Rutgers Plan for selected students.[4] Designated classes meet two or three times each week in a special room furnished with a library of several hundred books, most of them appropriate reading for college bound students. The teachers of "Rutgers" classes are also provided with theme readers and a special clerk. Although the program is still considered something of an experiment and has some logistical problems (students may not take books out of the room, for example), the consensus of teachers and administrators is that the additional expense of the program is more than justified in the results to date, particularly in the increased emphasis on student reading. Student response has been similarly positive.

Classroom observations in city schools revealed a pronounced shift away from composition in favor of literature. Although the sample may not reflect accurately *all* city schools, the meager 4.6 percent of class time devoted to instruction in composition seems significant, though it is often rationalized by the larger classes and teaching loads found in these schools. However, the point made in the discussion of composition in Chapter 6 must be reasserted here: the great problem appears to be that students are rarely *instructed* in writing, not that they lack opportunities to write. Actually, students in the city schools reported they were called upon to write just as frequently as students in other schools; moreover, able seniors reported that they write more often, averaging something more than once per week. Even though teacher loads are obviously greater in the city schools, the students are apparently afforded as many opportunities to write as are students in other kinds of schools.

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[4] Paul Diederich, "The Rutgers Plan for Cutting Class Size in Two," *English Journal*, XLIV (April 1960), pp. 229–236, 266.

The fact remains that observers seldom reported instruction in composition within the English classes visited. If a dearth of writing instruction is a shortcoming of the entire group of schools, it is a critical deficiency in the typical large-city comprehensive high school.

Teacher Recruitment and Assignment

From the point of view of project observers, the most unfortunate result of large-city administrative complexity is the policy of central recruitment and assignment of teachers.[5] In the city schools the responsibility for recruiting, screening, and hiring rests with the central personnel office, with only the rare principal or department chairman involved in the process at all. Some of the schools are simply far less attractive to the fledgling teacher than others, and, in order to maintain a balance of quality among all of the teaching staffs, districts have policies that require teachers to be employed first by the central office and then assigned to a school. Unquestionably, there are many able teachers who are reluctant to sign contracts, or even apply for them, if they are not given a firm commitment concerning the place they will teach. There is no question either that this policy works to the detriment of many of the schools in any given school district, from those in the "best" socioeconomic area to those in the most depressed sections of the city. The English teacher sent to the least favored school, even for the laudable intention of maintaining an equitable distribution of teaching talent, will not bring with him the necessary commitment unless he feels that the position offers a degree of importance and social worth in proportion to its disadvantages. If he is treated as a mere pawn in this district chess game, a lack of commitment or professional interest is more than understandable.[6]

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[5] See also the discussion of teacher selection in Chapter 4.

[6] Observers from the NCTE Task Force on Language Programs for the Disadvantaged noted that some schools in multiple school districts *did* conduct their own quasi-official recruitment and hiring in spite of

Among the small sample of city high schools represented in the project, only one principal indicated that central teacher assignment posed no great problem to recruiting the ablest teachers. Another said he had recruited teachers quite satisfactorily until stopped by the objections of the personnel office. Several others admitted their schools' reputations placed them in a favored position, providing them at least enough influence to request teachers even though the request was not always honored. One of the principals had even kept statistics to prove that 40 percent of the prospective candidates were irretrievably lost to the system because they could not be guaranteed a specific assignment.

In contrast to these hiring practices in city schools, the autonomous school districts in suburban areas can very actively seek new teachers without combatting the restraints of the larger system. Several chairmen and principals in affluent but small systems indicated they are not averse to following the raiding practices of some colleges and universities in order to find the most capable teachers for key positions. It is not uncommon for such schools to have a backlog of hundreds of applications, while many city school districts conduct a frantic search just before classes begin, to replace last-minute resignations. Most cities maintain a pool of uncertified and in many cases unqualified teachers for this eventuality, and a school's reputation is probably quite accurately reflected in the proportion of uncertified or substitute teachers on its staff.

To make individual schools, especially their principals and department chairmen, more responsible for the recruitment and selection of teachers would not deny the necessity of central personnel offices' acting at certain steps in the hiring process; but it

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central office policy which in effect forbade these practices. In the opinion of these observers and in the view of these principals, the means were more than justified by the ends; teachers who were selected because of their experience and their commitment to work in such programs were more successful than those who were sent from a central pool. Cf. Richard Corbin and Muriel Crosby, eds., *Language Programs for the Disadvantaged* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1965).

would diminish arbitrary and sometimes unfortunate decisions by administrators out of touch with the often subtle requirements of individual programs. Participants at two invitational conferences for department chairmen, held in conjunction with the National Study of High School English Programs, urged that English department chairmen be directly responsible for the quality of the programs.[7] This is not, however, to be construed as a direct criticism of the quality of the teachers observed in city high schools. Given the heavy work loads, the generally poor professional environment, and the quantity of administrative machinery with which these teachers had to cope, observers felt that most were doing as fine a job as could be expected. It was noted, however, that English departments in the city schools lacked the cohesiveness that was palpably evident in autonomous, smaller school systems. Such harmony can come only when the department chairman, the one person fully conversant with the needs and characteristics of the program, is directly involved in the hiring process.

Department Organization

Among the high schools from metropolitan centers there was as much variation as among the original 116 schools in the role and responsibility of the department chairman. At one extreme is the appointed chairman without additional pay or released periods; at the other is the teacher who must undergo a competitive examination for a vacancy that exists in another school in the system (since a teacher may not move up to the position of department chairman in his own school). Upon appointment, the latter may receive a salary increment of as much as $2,000 for assuming what are very real administrative and supervisory duties. Undoubtedly, the resulting department organization is much stronger than that in schools that rely on nominal chairmen. There is, however, an inherent danger that the chairman's position will become so highly administrative that he will serve as an arm of the administration first and as a department leader and coordinator second. When, for example, the chairman is required by administrative fiat to prepare twenty-eight copies of an evaluative report for a simple one-hour visit to a single teacher, the machinery of supervision would seem to override its more beneficial effects. When teachers are continually analyzed and evaluated according to report forms that tend to weigh all components equally (from adjusting window shades to giving appropriate assignments), they can be expected to follow prescriptive routines quite mechanically at the expense of more individual and more spontaneous teaching.

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[7] James R. Squire, Roger K. Applebee, Robert J. Lacampagne, *High School Departments of English: Their Organization, Administration, and Supervision* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1965).

Given a choice between the two extremes, the administrative department chairman is undoubtedly to be preferred over the nominal chairman in sizable schools. In the usually frenetic environment of the large school, the beginning teacher is likely to feel isolated unless there exists some formal apparatus to orient him to the routines of teaching and to help him use his individual assets to the best advantage. If the chairman is not given responsibility to supervise and evaluate the English teachers, the task falls to someone else—usually the principal or a generalist whose knowledge of subject and method is bound to be considerably less than that of the chairman. Finally, without an authoritative leader, the department cannot hope to achieve the kind of autonomy and consensus so important in the best programs observed in the Study. Particularly in large comprehensive high schools do departments need the kind of vigorous leadership that will guard against undesirable encroachments from without.

Summary

Metropolitan high schools are faced with most of the problems of other kinds of schools, but most of them occur with greater intensity and frequency. That these schools are only a small part of a multiple school district without the autonomy enjoyed by their counterparts in the suburbs or small cities brings many disadvantages and few compensations. One result of the administrative superstructure is that there are comparatively few innovative practices; programs are slow to react to changing student needs or scholarly research. Although individual teachers make many fine efforts, the constraints and special problems which they face militate against programs being as good as they might become under other circumstances. Two subjective reactions from observers at different schools will serve as a final summary of the range of quality noted. At one pole,

> Despite the oldness of the building and the crowded conditions, there is a spirit of learning reflected in this school. From class to class, in hallways, in informal encounters—teachers and students seem to understand that they are here for educational purposes. Although lacking the pressure and urgency of many suburban schools, ________ compares favorably with most city schools.

At the other, however,

> This is an anti-intellectual school if I ever saw one. Controlled reading, limited writing, uninspired and even incompetent teaching lead me to draw no other conclusion. I wonder how much of the atmosphere emanates from the school administration, how much from the central office, and how much from the teachers. My hunch is that all are culpable.

CHAPTER 12

Experimental English Programs

The study of selected English departments engaged in experimental program design began after visits to more than half of the 116 schools of the National Study had revealed comparatively little experimentation. The project staff, aware of widespread discussion in professional journals of new approaches to the teaching of English, wondered why so few departments were initiating curriculum changes. A supplementary grant from the United States Office of Education enabled the staff to visit experimental programs in nineteen schools in nine different states. In selecting these schools, the project directors again solicited recommendations from advisory committee members, state supervisors and consultants, and leading curriculum specialists. Methods of approaching the experimental schools were identical to those employed in visits to the original 116 schools of the Study.

Enrollment in the 19 schools engaged in experimental curriculum projects averaged 1,022 students which, when contrasted with the average of 1,797 students in the original 116 schools, suggests that curriculum experimentation may more likely occur in smaller high schools. In other ways, however, the experimental group resembled the rest of the schools in the Study. Student enrollment in commercial programs, numbers going on to college, the physical plant, and socioeconomic characteristics of the communities showed much the same range and medians as were found in the original Study. Because of the small number of schools involved, detailed data are not comparative, but observer reports suggest no marked differences in the composition of the two groups.

Not surprisingly, in view of the criteria used for selection, the physical plants of the schools attracted considerable attention in their reflection of administrative concern with innovational programs. In thirteen of the nineteen schools visited, new building or renovation made available to the English department special instructional areas to accommodate small and large groups, conference rooms, and other means to implement experimental approaches to teaching. This concern was reflected too in the strong libraries present in many of these schools. Whereas the average school in the Study reported holdings of only 6.8 books per student and annual expenditures on new books, replacements, and magazines of $2.28 per capita, the experimental schools averaged 8.5 books per student and expenditures of $4.64. As a group, the nineteen experimental schools came far closer to meeting the American Library Association's standards than did the original Study schools.

In reports on the content emphasis in 4,757 minutes of observed classroom time in 313 classes of the 19 experimental schools, stress on literature remained apparent, although at 39.3 percent of class time this was noticeably less than in the original 116 schools of the Study. The emphasis on language, composition, speech, and mass media remained relatively constant, however, with increases most noticeable in the emphasis on reading (more than doubled, from 4.5 percent to 9.9 percent).

The methods used by teachers in the experimental schools similarly parallel those found in the original sample. The noted increase from 1.6 percent to 7.1 percent in the use of audiovisual equipment is not surprising in view of the extensive equipment available in many of the experimental schools and the conscious effort to use visual materials to hold attention in large group meetings. Curiously, the percent of class time devoted to student presentation is less than half of that in the other schools (6.4 percent contrasted with 14.3 percent). Silent work rises from 10.4 to 13.5 percent, reflecting in part the larger numbers of independent study programs. Except for these minor changes, methods remain essentially the same: 60.1 percent of class time in the experimental schools (66 percent in the original 116 schools) was devoted to recitation, lecture, and discussion in almost equal proportions.

But if methods remain constant, certain specific practices are greatly modified in these programs. As Table 15 indicates, those approaches usually associated with experimental teaching—team teaching, use of multiple sets of books, independent study, pupil conferences with teachers—were found in frequent use in more than half of the schools. The most common approaches in the original sample—use of a single anthology, writing in class, and use of grammar textbooks—are less evident in the experimental programs, a finding, of course, conditioned by the basis of selection of these schools. Programed materials, however, are used no more widely in experimental programs than in the original 116 schools. Indeed, even in schools with special provisions for independent study, where self-instruction is of the utmost importance, the use of such materials is no more apparent than in conventional programs. That only one observer in twenty-eight reported such materials in frequent use even in these special programs suggests that it may be some time before programed texts find acceptance in the average classroom.

Experimental programs differ outwardly, then, primarily in their use of a few specific approaches, in available resources, and occasionally in classroom design. Observer reports suggested, however, certain other, more qualitative distinctions. Although quality of the teaching staff had ranked first among special strengths of the original programs, in only two instances did observers suggest that the quality of the staff was unusual in the schools with experimental programs in English. Indeed, the inadequacy of the staff ranked third among special weaknesses of these schools, led only by the ineffectiveness of department heads and lack of sequence in the curriculum. Department heads, however, if the greatest weaknesses in some programs, ranked first

Table 15

Selected Practices Reported in Widespread or Frequent Use in Experimental English Programs

(n = 28 reports on 16 schools)

Classroom Practice	*Number*	*Rank*	*Rank for 107 Schools in Original Study*
Team Teaching	22	1	12
Multiple Sets of Books	17	2	4
Independent Study	16	3	7
Pupil Conferences with Teacher	15	4	9.5
Writing in Class	13	5	2
Silent Reading in Class	10	6	5
Classroom Book Collections	9	7	8
Remedial Reading Program	8	8	11
Single Anthology	6	9.5	1
Developmental Reading Program	6	9.5	9.5
Use of Reading Laboratory	5	11	13
Use of Workbooks	4	12.5	6
Use of Grammar Textbooks	4	12.5	3
Programmed Instruction	1	14	14

among special strengths of the group as a whole because of others, followed by resources available for teaching, light teaching load, and climate of work in the department.

Indeed, administrative organization seemed to be the major concern in most schools with experimental programs in English, and important traditional segments of the curriculum suffered accordingly. Observers were not impressed with the curriculum sequences in these schools, their composition programs, or their teaching of literature, although again these had been singled out as unusual strengths of better English programs in general. Because of the varied nature of the programs, the descriptive reports are summarized in terms of four basic innovative patterns observed: variations in the use of staff, variations in scheduling and the use of time, variations in grouping students, and development of programs in the humanities.

Variations in the Use of Staff

To make better use of the special interests and training of individual teachers, some administrators have explored new patterns of organizing instruction. In a few schools such patterns are also designed to provide continuing inservice education for beginning teachers through regular contact with more experienced members of the staff. Although project observers rarely found experiments in staff utilization without some accompanying changes in the traditional school day, for convenience these topics will be discussed separately here.

Paraprofessional Help

In about 20 percent of the schools visited in all phases of the National Study, observers found attempts to relieve the English teacher of his more routine tasks through the provision of paraprofessional help. In the experimental programs almost half the English departments had such assistance. Clerical assistants in certain schools not only record grades, type, file, and maintain class rolls for individual teachers, but also manage textbook records, recording libraries, department centers, and even laboratory rooms for students. As the number of books and other equipment assigned to teachers of English increases, more assistance of this kind seems requisite.

The organization and functioning of lay reader programs, an important aid to teachers in almost one fifth of the programs visited, and the chief aides provided in nonexperimental schools, have already been described as part of the discussion of the teaching of composition in Chapter 6; a few comments on the implementation of such programs remain to be made here. The most successful programs, according to observers, are those in which the readers supplement rather than replace the efforts of the classroom teacher, who must still read and correct as many papers as he can as well as provide direct instruction in the processes of writing. Papers which are to be given to outside readers thus become assignments over and above what the students would ordinarily be expected to write. The distinction is an important one, for too many administrators regarded lay readers as a solution to the load problem and, not infrequently, offered English teachers the choice of either slightly reduced pupil-teacher ratios or the services of a part-time reader. This limited conception of the value of outside readers leads teachers to consider such paraprofessionals only as solutions to overcrowding, rather than as assistants with important contributions to make. Indeed, the schools which use readers most effectively are usually those in which teacher load is already reduced to four classes and not more than 115 to 125 students.

Only a few observers reported schools using paraprofessional help to supervise students in English classrooms. In one particularly effective program an intern teacher supervised a reading room containing a library of titles appropriate for student reading and numerous reference works, with space for seventy-five students. These facilities were shared by three English classes, with each of the cooperating teachers sending as many as twenty or twenty-five students to the room. By coordinating their daily assignments, the teachers were able to meet with small groups, seminars, and even individuals as they wished. On the day project staff members were visiting, one teacher sent half his class to the reading room, meeting with the rest for intensive discussion and study; another sent all but a few students to the room during the last half hour so that he could sit with a seminar of gifted students studying Sinclair Lewis's *Main Street;* and the third kept his class together while he introduced some material to the group as a whole. In the reading room itself, the supervisor helped students locate books, maintained order, and assisted those engaged in specific study assignments but did not otherwise share in instructional responsibilities. When programs of independent or guided study are threatened by a shortage of supervisory time, such use of paraprofessionals is a practice that might well be considered.

Television Teaching

In only a handful of schools, few of them in the experimental group, was closed circuit or educational television being used in the teaching of English, and then only as a supplement to regular classroom work. Closed circuit television programs prepared especially for certain groups of students were regularly broadcast in two districts where teachers received advance information concerning the programs. In one, broadcasts of a program in American literature were scheduled once or twice weekly to provide supplementary discussions of writers and the processes of writing, a review of American cultural achievements in architecture and dance, poetry readings, and similar "extras" beyond the range or resources of the individual classroom teacher. In general, teachers and students responded favorably, although many wished that kinescopes could be made available so that the programs could be used at the time when they would be most relevant to the studies of each individual class.

Far less satisfactory, according to project observers, was a course on structural grammar presented daily to 100 students supervised by one teacher of English and several proctors. The remoteness of the thirty-minute presentations and the inability of even the best teachers to offer adequate additional explanation in the remaining fifteen minutes of the class period made such instruction seem stiff, formal, and uninspiring. Even the television teacher felt the experience was unsatisfactory, although she was planning to repeat the course with fewer weekly programs and a smaller class group. Instruction of this kind seems to require planned follow-through in the classroom, for the remoteness of the media discourages student involvement. Indeed, most obvious concerning use of television in teaching English is the widespread lack of interest even in schools equipped for showings. Several schools which once reported flourishing programs seem to have abandoned the attempt. However important, then, as a supplementary resource, and however important in community service, educational television as a direct instructional aid seems not to have withstood the test of time.

This is not true, of course, with kinescopes based on television presentations. Flexible in their possibilities and capable of being incorporated into any instructional program, good kinescopes have most of the advantages of live television and are frequently used. Development of less expensive videotape transmitters suggests that they, too, may be common in schools of the future. Although willing to consider new approaches, teachers with overloaded classes and inadequate preparation time seek instructional aids free of complexities in planning and operation. Those interested in the possibilities of educational television would do well to devote more attention to making available to the schools kinescopes and videotapes of excellent programs.

Telelecture

The use of long distance telephone lectures to augment the resources available within the school is being explored in some programs. After making prior arrangements for a telephone conversation with Jesse Stuart, one school organized a two-week unit around his writings. Each class discussed questions to be directed to the writer and elected a representative panel of interviewers who talked with the author over the telephone at the appointed time while the rest of the student body listened. The experience provided unusual motivation for student reading as well as an effective demonstration of oral communication.

Even more unusual was the use which the administrator of one small rural school found for the telelecture when he learned that his half-time teacher of English was actually trained in another subject. Recognizing the need for more specialized resources, he designed a program of weekly readings by more mature students from several grade levels of a selected number of single books—novels, essay collections, biographies—followed each Friday by an hour-long telephone lecture and discussion led by a qualified staff member of the state university located 300 miles away. The comparatively low cost of telephone transmission, coupled with ease of operation, makes it a particularly useful aid for schools in isolated areas of the country.

Team Teaching

Project observers visited twenty-two programs which were experimenting with team teaching, including several experimental programs which had been chosen especially because of widely reported teaching teams. Unfortunately, in all but one or two cases observers found that the many theoretical advantages of such practices were simply not realized.

Perhaps the greatest problem was a lack of coordination and a real *team* effort: again and again there was only a flimsy division of responsibilities into discrete lessons that often lacked coordination and sequence. Programs made no provision for advanced planning and often left no time for the teachers involved to get together except during the lecture periods. When these large group meetings were followed by seminar discussions, the two were seldom intelligently related—and how could they be when the teachers who should have been listening had had to use that time to prepare their next lectures?

The lecture itself is a separate problem, and many question its value in a subject which must teach the student to read, to write, and to think critically. Lectures on literature too often deal with facts; lectures on composition fail to relate to the problems the students face as they write. Again and again, however, principals and department chairmen would proudly escort observers to an auditorium for "the show." And show it was. In attempting to capture and hold the attention of students for an hour, teachers resorted to a variety of aids and devices—transparencies, slides, tape recordings, dramatizations—which hold attention whether they teach anything important or not. Indeed, many administrators and teachers were so enthralled by these performances that they apologized repeatedly to project observers who appeared only when students were meeting in smaller groups.

Whatever their value in other subjects, however, large group lectures in English cannot carry the burden of instruction. To learn how to write effectively, students require careful criticism, individual conferences, and a detailed discussion of their own problems; to learn how to read critically they need to engage in carefully directed discussion of individual literary works. Although large group lectures could be planned to support these activities, even to motivate them, the instruction itself can be provided only in smaller groups.

Still, team teaching has great potential for individualizing instruction. In one situation involving slow readers, for example, some ninety students and four teachers met daily in a large reading room. There, for at least three hours each week, students read appropriate books of their own choice under the supervision of one or two teachers while the remaining teachers provided needed instruction in word attack, phonetics, and comprehension for groups of ten to fifteen students in smaller classrooms next to the large room. Here, through careful diagnosis of individual needs and intelligent use of teacher skills, the resources of a teaching team have been successfully tapped.

A shared teaching program which made possible small tutorial sessions in one large high school also seemed commendable. Three large group lecture hours per week, directed by two teachers, and a one-hour tutorial in which six students met with one of the teachers were used in this program for tenth grade English. The teachers lectured jointly to two separate classes of 100 students each, an instructional load of six hours per teacher per week, and devoted about seventeen additional class hours apiece per week to meeting with small tutorial groups. Of the thirty teaching hours during a five-day week, the teachers were thus occupied for a maximum of twenty-three. Observers reported that the large group lectures were as superficial as those in so many other schools, but they were enthusiastic about the tutorial sessions. One wrote: "For the learning values which a student can derive from an hour of well planned tutorial instruction in writing or reading with a master teacher, I would willingly accept the banal but harmless nature of the large group lectures."

Yet too few schools were considering what might be accomplished in such smaller groups.

Like many other innovations discussed in this report, team teaching has failed thus far to make an important contribution to English instruction. Only when the program is carefully planned and coordinated, when it provides adequate preparation time for all the teachers involved, and when its potentials for individualizing instruction are realized does team teaching manage to be more than an administrative means to a series of showy lectures which, however impressive, have little relevance to the goals of English instruction. Not too facetiously, one weary observer suggested that teams of teachers be assigned four or five small classrooms without a large lecture hall and be asked to plan jointly whatever might be accomplished under such conditions.

Variation in Scheduling and Use of Time

No less revolutionary but frequently more successful are the many experiments with the use of teaching time. That a slow seventh grade English class requires the same number of hours and distribution of minutes as a twelfth grade honors class may seem patently absurd, yet the typical organization of the school day assumes that the requirements at every level are the same. Recognizing that students may indeed use class and study time best in different ways at different levels, some teachers and administrators have been seeking ways to achieve greater variety. Although experiments in scheduling overlap those already reported under new uses of staff, certain promising practices were observed that deserve to be discussed here.

Large and Small Groups

In some schools English instruction is regularly divided into a set number of large group sessions, seminars, and periods for independent study. This seems more an administrative than a curricular innovation, whatever opportunities for curriculum change it may provide, and differs in this respect from the team teaching experiments already reported. In one such program, the teacher responsible weekly for two lecture sessions with 125 students also met twice with each student in a seminar of 10 students and supervised his work during two independent study hours devoted largely to writing and reading. In another institution, four teachers jointly planned one session for 200 or more students each week but worked separately with seminars of 10 students on the regular schedule. Still another variation called for large group meetings on Monday, with seminars directed by a certified teacher alternating with study periods supervised by a nonprofessional for the rest of the week.

Such variety has long been a goal of English teachers, who otherwise must try to plan work with small groups and even individuals within the context of the traditional class of twenty-five or thirty students. In practice, however, the advantages of such programs remain all too often unrealized. By their very nature the large group meetings encourage lectures, but, as already noted, project observers found such approaches—all too common even in the conventional classroom—relatively ineffective in a subject such as English. Indeed, the lack of attention to methods of presentation other than the lecture suggests that, whenever schools do institute programs involving large groups, inservice education may be necessary if teachers are to use the instructional time effectively.

If large groups are often disappointing, however, they are the *sine qua non* for small group instruction. The demands of space and staff make it almost impossible, in the public school at least, for all classes to be held to ten or fifteen students. Such seminars have great potential for close study of literature, careful teaching of composition, and detailed instruction in reading and the other English skills. When carefully planned and supervised by a teacher alert to the unique possibilities of the small group, these classes were among the most exciting reported by project observers, with attention to individuals, free exchange of ideas, and discussion in greater depth than could be considered in the conventional classroom.

Yet many programs neglect the planning and coordination which alone can make such classes successful. Heterogeneous class groupings ignore the needs of individual students; seminars are often unrelated to the parallel large group meetings; teachers fail to plan even informally their seminar classes in advance. In one extreme case, a teacher told observers that such classes were scheduled merely to give students a chance to "interact," and it did not matter whether such "interaction" was related to English at all! Of this the observer wrote: "Such time is largely wasted. Most of the talk is only at the level of a bull session or, I suppose, a slumber party. Sometimes six or eight students are talking at once. Sometimes one argumentative person monopolizes half or more of the time. Under such conditions, 'discussion' sometimes doesn't rise above the level of 'Yes, it is,' 'No, it isn't.' The relationship of the hour to the supposed topic of a unit is often slight or invisible."

Poor teaching is poor teaching, whether in large groups or small. A teacher who abdicates his fundamental responsibility of guiding student learning cannot be excused because of the system in which he is working, nor should a system be condemned because of the incompetence of some of those involved in it. Undirected, student-led discussion has a place in the English classroom, but it must be built upon conscious, directed study of the skills of conversation and communication.

In other cases the work in the seminars was carefully directed but entirely unrelated to the large group lectures or to independent study periods in which the students were also involved. Thus, in effect, a student was enrolled in at least two separate English classes—a large group meeting once or twice a week and a seminar usually also scheduled twice weekly; if he had independent study or laboratory work, his assignments there were usually unrelated to his other classes. Such problems arose even when all the classes for a given student were supervised by a single teacher; with a team of teachers, the problems of coordination were magnified substantially. How many of these hardships were merely characteristic of programs not yet well established is difficult to say, but it seems clear that the coordination of large and small group sessions poses special problems for the instructional program. Many teachers were frank enough to recognize the difficulties, franker still to indicate that they lacked the planning time required for a solution. However they lauded the new approaches, they felt that considerably more careful planning was necessary than for the conventional class.

Modular Scheduling

In another attempt to provide flexible scheduling, a few of the experimental programs divided their time into modules of fifteen, twenty, or thirty minutes. These modules could then be grouped into daily periods of unequal length: a three-module period on Monday (45 minutes) might be followed by two modules on Tuesday (30 minutes) and by four on Wednesday (60 minutes). Enjoying the advantages of flexibility, some teachers limited their use of short periods to lessons in English grammar or to spelling tests and reserved the longer periods for lessons in literature and composition. Almost invariably they responded favorably, although a few found it difficult to adjust to such a variable schedule.

Fragmentation of instruction was sometimes the result: in one program an observer reported two modules of reading on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (40 minutes), one module of "declamation" on Tuesday and Thursday mornings (20 minutes), one module of speech on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons (20 minutes), three modules of composition on Friday (60 minutes), and other fragments of English strewn throughout the week. Such neglect of the interrelationships among the skills of language, doomed to failure, is one pitfall which administrators and teachers must remain aware of and attempt to avoid.

If modular scheduling can neglect the demands of the subject, it can also impose unreasonable demands on the students. One computerized program visited by staff members was so outrageously lacking in organizational principle that it was impossible for either student or teacher to recall his daily assignments without a program card. On Monday, for example, English was scheduled from 9:00 to 9:45 A.M., but on Tuesday it met from 2:30 to 3:00 P.M.; on Wednesday it preceded the noon hour; on Thursday it was split into morning and afternoon hours of equal length. Noting the confusion of one tenth grader still fingering his program card in late February, an observer discovered with dismay that the schedule had been in operation since the previous September!

To avoid such chaos, some administrators with low enrollments do their own modular scheduling rather than relying on computer machines. This enables them to reschedule or readjust classes as necessary, giving the English teacher an extra hour when classwork demands more careful guidance, less time when the students are working primarily on their own. Provided adjustments are not too abrupt nor class schedules changed too radically, such flexibility has real advantages. Although modular scheduling is new and the dangers apparent, its potential is also great.

Occasional Lengthened Periods

Recognizing the significance of the process of composing and of providing sufficient class time not only for discussion and prewriting activity but for supervised classroom writing experiences as well, an increasing number of schools provide an occasional double period for composition. In some schools, students were scheduled for English and social studies during adjacent periods so that every other week each teacher could keep them for two hours. In another school, the administrator arranged monthly for each class—whether English, science, or industrial arts—to meet for an extended two-hour block. One of the successes of the Dean Langmuir-NEA Project on Composition has been its refinement of the extended composition period.[1] The writing processes which can only begin in the conventional class period of fifty minutes can be followed through in a two-hour one.

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[1] Arno Jewett and Clarence Bish, *Improving English Composition* (Washington D.C., National Education Association, 1965).

Observers were favorably impressed by attempts during such extended periods to assist students with the processes of writing as they were engaged in writing.

Long periods in English have other uses, too. Field trips are less popular today than in the past, but brief trips to art museums or local centers of interest are more possible when lengthened periods are scheduled. So too is development of a serious program of film study. Increasingly aware of their obligations to teach the motion picture as contemporary literature and to assist students in applying to film the analytical methods of study and evaluation they learn in studying literature, many teachers have found it virtually impossible to organize such study within the fifty-minute period. During a two-hour block of time, on the other hand, such major American and foreign films as *The Informer, High Noon,* or *The Seventh Seal* can be shown, then discussed during regular class hours. The long period offers many possibilities for reorganizing work in English.

Reading Rooms and Writing Laboratories

Some schools have created specially equipped study halls as part of their reorganization of class time to provide more independent study in English. Although in-class individual reading was not common in the 158 schools visited by the project staff, classroom libraries were characteristic of many schools with independent study, and four had organized reading rooms (usually with reading supervisors) to which English classes were regularly assigned. Two schools, moreover, required two hours of independent study each week in a special English laboratory in which not only books but also recordings, programed materials, typewriters, and other supplies were available.

Slow students had their own laboratory for English and science, an imaginative combination of materials for English and reading with high interest science equipment. Both a science teacher and an English teacher were regularly assigned to the laboratory to help the students. Adjacent to the laboratory room stood a specially designed reading center, complete with comfortable reclining chairs and carefully chosen books of high interest but low vocabulary demand. With reasonable planning and careful supervision by teachers, independent work in such laboratory rooms can be productive. The obvious enthusiasm of students moving from station to station, completing lessons, listening to recordings, viewing film strips, and entering corrected compositions in cumulative folders kept in these rooms indicated their success.

In another interesting variation on the specially equipped laboratory, junior high students in a small, isolated community of the Southwest worked individually during a long English period at the beginning of the day. Students worked through prescribed programed materials, literature, and writing assignments, taking special tests at the end of particular units and consulting one of the two teachers in the classroom when necessary. A clerk also helped supply materials and administer tests, leaving the teachers free for once to teach. During the following "period," senior high students took over the laboratory, while their junior high counterparts went on to other courses, some of which were "taught" in the same fashion.

Such a program clearly depends on the commitment and knowledge of the teachers, who must be prepared to cooperate closely to outline the course in detail. Fortunately for this school, the teachers appeared to be both knowledgeable and industrious, and, although the system had only recently begun, there was evidence of considerable success and enthusiasm. On the negative side, when all traditional class sessions are dropped, the dynamics of the classroom, the interaction of the students, the emotional immediacy of literature, and the opportunity to develop discussion skills are lost. Nevertheless, this program demonstrates that a variety of programed materials can be used successfully in a context of continuous instruction quite apart from the normal classroom situation.

Expanded school libraries and instructional materials centers with carrels for independent work, listening rooms, and opportunities for viewing, listening, and writing, however, are being introduced more frequently than special laboratories for English. Although enchanted by the design and possibilities of these expanded libraries, observers seldom found them as widely used as the regularly scheduled and specially designed laboratory rooms. Perhaps because many librarians feel that regularly scheduled classes prevent independent use of the learning center, administrators have been loath to schedule independent library periods for students. Perhaps this is as it should be. Still the success of some laboratory periods for English suggests that either ways must be found to permit student groups to work in school libraries or parallel facilities for regularly scheduled independent study must be established.

Independent Study

In one school visited by the project staff, the strikingly successful illustration of a sound independent study program occurred in the laboratory described. It was well equipped, it provided ample space and reasonable freedom, and it was supervised—gently but firmly—by teachers. In schools where students were granted independence but not held responsible for their use of time, the hours were largely wasted. In one school, observers watched some 200 boys clamber across a fence to watch a baseball game in a neighboring junior high school. In another, despite a physically attractive library conducive to study, pupils seemed content to loll in the hallways rather than to engage in any intellectual task.

Much of the success of independent study programs seems to depend on the directions given by teachers. When these directions are relatively precise, when students know what to do despite a great number of choices, they respond well; when given time without clear direction, they do not. Several experimental schools which once attempted independent study programs had abandoned the effort even before project observers arrived; others were considering substantial modifications. Learning to use freedom with responsibility is an important goal of American secondary education—but it is a goal which can be approached only with careful guidance. As one observer wrote after viewing a characteristic program, "Students are given much freedom to complete certain work according to their own rate and interest. Highly motivated students probably can go very far, but I fear the average student, without some built-in motivation, will not gain much purpose or incentive here."

Except where selected advanced students are involved, the best solution for providing semi-independent study appears to be the supervised English study hall, reading room, or laboratory period, an intermediate stage between the restrictive atmosphere of the traditional study hall and the complete freedom of "non-assignment." In a laboratory room filled with reading and viewing materials, given options for study and independent work and reasonable freedom to move and to choose, most young people make good use of their time.

Variations in Grouping

With natural variations in human ability and learning, wide differences in capacity and achievement are expected in any heterogeneous school population. Reading ages based on standardized test scores, once widely used as a basis for sectioning, may vary by twelve years in a twelfth grade population. An overwhelming majority of schools in this Study try to accommodate differences in student ability through three- and four-track programs which classify students into below average, average, above average, or college bound sections. In one extreme case, observers—much to their disbelief as well as disapproval—found eleven different ability groups at every instructional level. However, such ultimately unsuccessful attempts to categorize students into a great many levels are as unusual as is abandonment of any grouping practices. Although the evidence accumulated in this Study suggests that grouping in some form is accepted by most American teachers and administrators, their concern about certain harmful effects of present practices has led a few schools to experiment with new approaches to the problem of coping with individual differences.

Ungraded Teaching

In an attempt to remove any ceiling to the achievement of gifted pupils, as well as to provide adequate instruction for the slow, some high schools are experimenting with ungraded teaching. One widely emulated approach is that developed at Melbourne, Florida, High School where English classes are divided into five ungraded levels.[2] Each student generally continues through his high school years in the ungraded section to which he is first assigned, whether basic, regular, advanced, honors, or Quest. Quest students, the very superior, pursue almost a complete program of independent study under the general supervision of a Quest program supervisor, but with regular classroom teachers as outside consultants. Carrels for individual study, conference rooms, and a variety of reference materials are provided in the school library, which also serves as headquarters for the Quest program supervisor. Although observers found special efforts being made both for the honors groups (in close study of literature) and basic sections (in reading), they reported classwork for regular and advanced groups, the middle sections, to be indistinguishable from that in any conventional English program.

One problem unique to the Melbourne Plan and others patterned on it faces all but the most widely read teachers: because each class enrolls first-year, second-year, and third-year students, the content, particularly literary content, cannot be repeated from semester to semester. Throughout the school, the program is organized in cycles which emphasize American literature, English literature, or world literature only once every three years. The plan thus easily avoids problems of duplication and repetition, especially of literary content, but it also breeds superficiality. A teacher who comes to "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" only every fourth year is not likely to develop the sharp insight of one who continually restudies and reteaches the work and profits from errors in teaching. Only in four regular sections, where teachers were independently developing units on literary genre and planning to exchange classes during the year to teach their specialities, did staff members seem even slightly aware of the unique difficulties which the three-year teaching cycle imposed on instruction.

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[2] The Melbourne Plan has been described in detail in B. Frank Brown, *The Non-Graded High School* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., Prentice-Hall, 1964).

A different approach to ungraded teaching was observed in one western school where students, once they had passed two specified courses in communications, were required only to select six courses from among a wide variety of ungraded electives. The basic communication courses provided a review of elementary skills in writing, reading, and speaking; students scoring sufficiently high on placement examinations were exempted and could elect eight different semesters in English. In effect, the less able students were programed for a year into basic courses (and on occasion, as the department chairman noted, it was for more than a year if they had not achieved sufficient competence), while the able English student could elect from a variety of nongraded English classes for all of his high school career.

A third approach to ungraded programing identified by project observers was a series of offerings for gifted or honors students extending over the entire high school program, in some instances down to the junior high school. The most conventional of the programs provided only a single class composed of first-, second-, and third-year pupils; the most experimental released students into ungraded classes in art, social studies, and other subjects as well as English. Some involved college or university instructors from nearby institutions, and a few encouraged able students to enroll for credit courses in local colleges as early as their sophomore year. Like the Melbourne Plan, most of these programs managed to avoid repetition in content and emphases only by adopting a three-year cycle of instruction. They too achieved the flexibility of ungraded placement only by sacrificing a planned sequence in concept development; the year in which a student entered the program determined when he encountered any particular idea about language or literature.

English by Choice

Related to ungraded classes in the effect they achieve, but basically different in purpose, are programs permitting students to elect the English classes which they need and want. In the most extreme programs visited by project observers, some thirty-six separate options were open to students, ranging from composition, speech, and grammar review to structural linguistics, American folklore, and the nineteenth-century British novel. In one school where variations of "English by Choice" had been instituted, students were rescheduled every nine weeks, propelling the administration and student advisers into what seemed to observers an almost continuous nightmare of scheduling.

Programs of this kind emphasize the importance of student interests more than the integrity of subject matter. They seem to carry to an extreme the assumption that young people will group themselves in accordance with their unique needs. This did indeed occur to some extent, and observers were pleased to discover in one school that three times as many students had elected Shakespeare as had signed up for contemporary fiction, but more guidance is required than harassed teachers and counselors can usually provide.

A second problem is the fragmentation caused by such stress on separate courses, forcing teachers to prepare unique offerings which in total resembled nothing quite so much as the schedule issued by an institution of higher education. The wisdom of exclusively devoting even nine weeks of secondary school teaching to a separate course in structural linguistics or nineteenth-century poetry was questioned by all project observers, stunned at the implicit assumptions that all subject matter in English is equal in value, that no sequence or pattern in study is desirable, that students should be permitted to select courses of such varying content and purpose with almost complete freedom.

Still, the enthusiasm of teachers and students was one of the most notable features of the program. Perhaps, as programs like

"English by Choice" continue to develop, a way can be found to overcome the problems manifest in present operations.

Frequent Resectioning

If a major administrative problem in programs offering "English by Choice" is the resectioning of students every semester or half-semester, such problems are only intensified in schools where pupils are regrouped more frequently. In one school, a small department of only five English teachers functioned as a single teaching team, meeting frequently to plan what to teach at every grade level, as there was no formal course of study or curriculum guide. Regrettably, however, they were committed to resectioning all students at all levels at least once every three weeks. Immediately before each reshuffling, each member of the department would explain to all students, assembled in a large auditorium, what he planned to teach during the next three-week interval. One teacher might indicate he wished to present *Huckleberry Finn,* another to teach business letters. The choices were designed to satisfy the diversity of interest and problems represented in the student body, and the students, with some advice from teachers, could choose their assignments for each three-week period.

As it operated in this school, this approach had a number of disadvantages. English became fragmented to the point where it lacked continuity. Discipline was lax and deteriorating, largely because few teachers seemed to know the students' names, much less their special problems. Change for the sake of change seemed to be the primary concern of all participating in the program, shattering any continuous development of the writing, reading, and discussion skills essential to success in English. Indeed, in few schools visited by project observers did the overall quality of English teaching seem so low.

Yet the plan is commendable in its attempts to utilize the special skills and interests of the teachers and to provide for the needs of individual students. A more experienced staff would surely have foreseen and overcome some of the problems noted. (The principal of the school informed observers that two highly qualified English teachers had left the year before as a result of disagreement over changes in the program. It is small wonder that first rate teachers would decline to associate themselves with the sham presently passing for English in the school!) Perhaps less frequent regrouping would solve problems, or students could continue with one teacher for three days each week but be assigned to another for specialized instruction on the other two. Whatever the ultimate answer, it seemed clear to project observers that purpose, perspective, and reasonable control of student learning in English can easily be lost if adequate provision is not made for continuity in learning and for developing basic pupil-teacher relationships.

The involvement of exceptional numbers of young, inexperienced, and sometimes ill-prepared teachers of English in many of the experiments with flexible student grouping was apparent to observers who visited more than one school. Some administrators clearly admitted their preference for "uncommitted" young teachers, rather than for "inflexible" older hands. Undoubtedly, beginning teachers, who lack tenure, security, and sometimes a strongly entrenched philosophy of education, are more amenable to administrators' suggestions for curriculum change. Yet to project observers, some of the superficiality observed in these experimental programs seemed less a reflection of the value of the new approaches than of the immaturity of the teachers. To what extent the teaching problems might have been overcome by teachers with much experience, no observer could say. Regrettable as it may be, few schools embarked upon experimental programs seem to be able to bring together successfully those who best know English with those who would create new patterns of grouping for young people in our schools. Until more specialists in English and education are involved immediately and basically in the construction of new programs, permanent progress is not likely to be rapid or sure.

Programs in the Humanities

Most humanities programs involve a fusion of literary study with the study of art, architecture, music, philosophy, and sometimes history. The John Hay Fellows Program, the Great Books Program of Mortimer Adler, the humanities film series initiated by Floyd Rinker and the Commission for the Humanities on Television (since continued independently by Encyclopaedia Britannica Films), and the rise in the study of film as art have accented a growing national concern over the state of the humanities. With the report of the Commission on the Humanities and the establishment of the National Endowment for the Humanities in 1965, such developments—which have already led to the institution of humanities programs in 20 percent of the 158 schools in the Study—seem likely to continue. What, then, are the characteristics of present pilot programs in the humanities? In the Study schools four approaches appear to dominate: the culture epoch approach, the great themes approach, the multimedia approach, and the major works approach.

The culture epoch approach to a humanities program is organized around the great periods of humane endeavor: classic Greece and Rome, the medieval feudal period, the Renaissance, and the Enlightenment, with an emphasis on cultural and intellectual values rather than political history. Art and architecture, literature, and especially music provide an introduction to man's expression of ideas and ideals. Thus the study of the Renaissance, for example, may involve selections from Machiavelli's *The Prince*, Cellini's *Autobiography*, and a Petrarchan sonnet or two, as well as paintings by Leonardo da Vinci and sculpture by Michelangelo. Such interdisciplinary offerings are particularly conducive to team teaching effort by instructors from English, history, music, and art, while the magnificent resources supplied by the humanities film series of Encyclopaedia Britannica Films encourage large group presentations. A special resource room for a course on American civilization has been established in one school so that students may spend a portion of a two-hour time block in quietly studying prints, viewing slides, or listening to recordings. Yet it seems fair to say that, while such courses are serving basic instructional ends, ways must still be found to provide small group study of individual literary texts. Project observers felt strongly that the superficial acquaintance with literary and artistic expression which students develop when they have no real chance for discussion serves not at all to accentuate their perception of the humanities.

In a majority of schools visited, such courses are introduced during the final years of high school to college bound boys and girls. Few attempts have yet been made to provide such rich interdisciplinary study for general students, who would seem most to deserve attention in this area. Although present liberal arts requirements will see that college bound students do not miss intellectually satisfying humanistic experiences, all but two of the programs observed were directed exclusively towards them. Yet should not the terminal or general student also be given the opportunity to explore English, history, music, and art in this way?

Similar in purpose to the culture epoch approach, the great themes program focuses on the profound and humane questions of all ages, e.g., Man's Response to Nature, The Nature of Beauty, Fate, and Free Will. Such thematically-centered studies need not be confined to a single age or area but may range across continents and centuries to include those documents which best illuminate the ideas at hand. Students have been known to follow the study of Euripides' *Electra* with Robert Penn Warren's *All the King's Men,* to move from Donne's "Meditation" to Stevenson's "Eldorado" and O'Neill's *Emperor Jones.* At one school readers studying "Man as a Creature with Potential for Growth" read Helen Keller's *Three Days to See,* then viewed Robert Flaherty's magnificent *Nanook of the North* in an approach using other media besides literature.[3] Whatever the dangers of superficiality and distortion, it is clear that thematic units can provide an exciting framework for organizing classroom study.

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[3] See the discussion of this program by Miriam B. Goldstein and Edward C. Martin in "Humanistic Education for the General Student," *The English Leaflet,* LXIII:3 (Fall 1964), pp. 11–14.

In the multimedia approach to humanities courses the emphasis falls on the creative process and the methods and views of the artist. In such instruction students concern themselves less with the products as aesthetic expressions—the cathedral, concerto, or literary document—than with the manner and method of the artist—his point of view, voice, or exploration of contrast—which is either direct or implied. Thus students come to understand better the interrelationship of form and structure in all art and the points of contrast in purpose and intent between poet and painter, between musician and novelist. One of the best organized programs of this kind is the elective Allied Arts course developed by the state of Missouri and now taught in a number of schools throughout the state.[4] Another exists in a New England school where activities include the study of Picasso's "Guernica" in conjunction with Wilder's *The Skin of Our Teeth,* as well as visits to such outside centers as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Yale Art Gallery, and the Shakespearean Playhouse at Stratford.[5] Related are the attempts of the new precollege centers of Educational Services, Incorporated, to show the creative mind at work through original writings by artists in various disciplines. Thus students first review the diaries, journals, letters, notebooks, and autobiographies of men like Vincent van Gogh or Charles Darwin, then examine the finished product—the poem, painting, scientific law, or aesthetic principle. The result seems to be a gradual awakening of student awareness of the nature of creativity in art.[6]

The fourth approach to humanistic content in literature is the course based on the reading and study of major texts. Influenced on the one hand by the work of Mortimer Adler and on the other by the emphasis placed on textual reading by the Advanced Placement Program, such programs provide students with an introduction to a wide range of literary selections of many kinds and countries—a Greek tragedy and perhaps Plato's *Republic;* an introduction to medieval thought through study of a romance like *Tristan and Iseult,* and an appropriate Canterbury Tale; one or two Shakespearean plays; several essays by Bacon, Voltaire, and Rousseau; some French and Russian novelists; Swift's *Gulliver's Travels;* an example of nineteenth-century nonfiction (perhaps Carlyle for his views of history as the study of great men); Chekhov and Ibsen, certainly, among the major playwrights of the past century; and possibly one modern masterpiece, *The Great Gatsby* or a Faulkner or Hemingway novel.

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[4] *The Allied Arts* (Columbia, Mo., State Department of Public Instruction, 1963).

[5] Evelyn M. Copeland, "There Was a Child Went Forth," *English Journal,* 54:3 (March 1965), pp. 182–184.

[6] Lettie J. Austin, "Teaching English at the Precollege Centers," *ESI Quarterly Report* (Summer-Fall 1965), pp. 179–181.

A tall order, and one whose greatest weakness becomes clear as this canon is listed: there is simply too much of the too great. If the program is to be worthwhile, the scope must be sufficiently limited to allow a careful approach to and analysis of the chosen books. In some schools visited, such a textual approach is stressed from ninth grade on in all advanced placement offerings in English. Observers described one program which devoted three weeks each to a number of great works of literature—the first week for careful reading, the next two for writing and discussion. In another school a teacher even experimented with a semiweekly thirty-minute humanities program with selected sixth grade students.

Some would say that such programs are not humanities courses at all, but merely regular literature courses. If so, may there be more of them. In their emphasis on the ideals and values expressed by each work, in their concern with how the artist expresses, perceives, and celebrates experience, in their concentration on the uniqueness of expression, they are humanistic in the best sense. Seeking to introduce students to the greatest ideas of all time as expressed in their most permanent forms, such programs are important in any democratic society. As the late James J. Lynch was fond of saying, "Who can think the thoughts of Lincoln unless he is nourished on the same food?"

There is much to be said in favor of the instruction which introduces young people to great human achievement. Yet there is much with which to concern ourselves. In a recent critique of many such English programs, John Searles warns that the "concept of selectivity as opposed to that of coverage" must govern both the scope of the curriculum in the humanities and the details selected for presentation.[7] Unless some such principle rigorously governs instruction, such courses may tend to become little more than "a culture bath," a "wallowing in the luxuriousness" of literature and music. Searles is not alone in his warning. In New England's *The English Leaflet*, Fred Stocking reviewed present offerings and advanced what he called "four strong opinions" concerning the planning of such courses. Each is worth careful consideration:

> 1. There is no such thing as an *ideal* course in the humanities for high school students: an excellent course might be designed in any of a dozen different ways, and the best course for any school exploits the particular talents which are available.
>
> 2. The better courses are usually taught by two or more teachers—one from music or art, one from literature, one from history, for instance. But unless there happen to be two or more teachers who share an exuberant desire to work together in such a course, a single energetic and enthusiastic teacher, with diverse interests and a mastery of several disciplines, might well be preferable.
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> 3. The best courses awaken that kind of interest in the humanities which is based on depth of understanding rather than on a glib familiarity with names and titles, or on the social fun of field trips. That is, good courses never make any attempt at coverage. One novel, one painting, and one opera out of the middle of the 19th century might well provide more than enough material for a semester.
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> 4. The goal of such a course should be: first, to arouse interest in the arts as providing experiences valuable for their own sake;

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[7] John R. Searles, "Are Humanities Programs the Answer?" *English Journal*, 54:3 (March 1965), pp. 175–181.

> second, to show that an art work acquired deeper meaning when placed in its historical context; and third, to make clear that a full understanding of—and delight in—any one of the arts requires the eventual mastery of difficult, complicated, and highly rewarding intellectual disciplines.[8]

But offerings in the humanities need not fall prey to every snare if adequate thought and sufficient preparation go into them, if unscholarly and misleading relationships are not insisted upon, if the external trappings of class organization are not permitted to interfere with the responses of the student to the individual literary work.

In any such program, however, the literature itself must remain central in the insight it offers into the artist's role in society and in the sensitizing, humanizing influence it provides. Perhaps no one in our time has better stated the case for literary study than the distinguished critic Northrop Frye, who in insisting on its value directs our attention to the ultimate practicality of all of the humanities:

> It is essential for the teacher of literature, at every level, to remember that in a modern democracy a citizen participates in society mainly through his imagination. We often do not realize this until an actual event with some analogy to literary form takes place; but surely we do not need to wait for a president to be assassinated before we can understand what a tragedy is and what it can do in creating a community of response. Literature, however, gives us not only a means of understanding, but a power to fight. All around us is a society which demands that we adjust or come to terms with it, and what that society presents to us is a social mythology. Advertising, propaganda, the speeches of politicians, popular books and magazines, the clichés of rumor, all have their own kind of pastoral myths, quest myths, hero myths, sacrificial myths, and nothing will drive these shoddy constructs out of the mind except the genuine forms of the same thing. We all know how important the reason is in an irrational world, but the imagination, in a society

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[8] Fred H. Stocking, "High School Humanities Courses: Some Reservations and Warnings," *The English Leaflet*, LXIII:5 (Fall 1964), pp. 37–38.

> of perverted imagination, is far more essential in making us understand that the phantasmagoria of current events is not real society, but only the transient appearance of real society. Real society, the total body of what humanity has done and can do is revealed to us only by the arts and sciences; nothing but the imagination can apprehend that reality as a whole, and nothing but literature in a culture as verbal as ours can train the imagination to fight for the sanity and dignity of mankind.[9]

A Cautionary Note on Change in English

Effective teaching of English demands teachers who know their subject and know their students. In the best experimental programs, as in all good English programs, teachers seldom lose sight of their fundamental responsibilities. When an intellectual interest in the study of literature, composition, language, and the supporting skills is paramount in a program, innovative practices can spur a faculty to even more efficient teaching. But, as the reports of the National Study make clear, too often change is encouraged and directed by administrators and supervisors who, in their concern for innovation and administrative arrangements, forget both the subject and the student. Weak teachers, uncertain of their subject and their teaching responsibility, are too often swayed by such influences; strong teachers, albeit sometimes overly resistant to change, are not as likely to lose perspective. Too much of the leadership in curriculum innovation in English, if these nineteen schools are representative, seems to be coming less from teachers and supervisors of English than from well-meaning administrators who lack insight into the nature of the subject. Only as classroom leaders in English teaching join with leaders in educational administration in exploring the possibilities and problems of innovative practices in English are substantial gains likely to be made. In only a few instances in this Study were such cooperative efforts obvious to project observers.

The National Study revealed numerous potential contributions of experimental development. The enthusiasm of both

[9] Northrop Frye, "Elementary Teaching and Elemental Scholarship," *PMLA*, LXXIX:2 (May 1964), p. 18.

teachers and students, even when it seemed misdirected, is widely characteristic of innovation. Indeed, the project observer who commented that "staff members seem to be stimulated to work at 150 percent of capacity" was merely commenting on a phenomenon noted by observers in even the most inadequate programs. But without long-range results, without greater concern for student and subject, how long can such enthusiasm continue? In more than a few programs, what one observer called the "pseudo-intellectual, not anti-intellectual, teaching" was already resulting in disorganized student behavior and confused reactions. No matter how impressively intricate the restructuring of classes, a program which causes an experienced college observer to wince at the "wholesale talking about ideas, wholesale digestion of books, and little careful analysis" is a program destined to fail.

The importance of careful planning and of continuing education for teachers engaged in experimental work was illustrated again and again. Summer workshops, scheduled conference time, leadership teams, and consultant help can all provide important support for teachers. Secretarial assistance is mandatory where frequent reorganization of student and teacher schedules is characteristic. Newly designed classrooms, extensive school and classroom library resources, audiovisual equipment, reasonable teaching loads—these too are essential. A few dissents notwithstanding, most teachers engaged in such teaching admit that the demands on preparation time are far greater than in conventional teaching. Those seeking inexpensive ways of solving the class load problem in English will not find it among these innovative practices.

Clearly the experimental programs visited in this Study provide no easy remedy for the ills of English teaching in our schools. Staff members were disappointed to find so few programs which even approached the quality of the better programs studied among the original schools. But confusion and uncertainty as well as error in judgment are likely to be characteristic of all innovation. Most programs described here had been in operation for only two or three years; to compare them in all respects with the better established programs, developed over a decade or two, would seem patently unfair. Hidden within many of the programs is the germ of an idea which, carefully attempted, developed, and perfected, may have much to contribute to more conservative curriculums. Schools need to remember that this is the function of all innovation. But those schools involved directly and fully in new experiments need even more to recall that sound change is usually an evolutionary process. The best programs of the future will surely represent a union of the best of the English teaching tradition, with its concern for student and subject, with the best of the experimental approaches.

CHAPTER 13

Final Observations

A study as complex and varied as this analysis of the teaching of English in 158 American high schools cannot be summarized easily. In one sense, the report consists of a series of separate studies of aspects of the teaching of English, each summarized in an individual chapter. But, early in the project, twelve hypotheses were advanced to guide the direction of the project. A summary of findings with respect to each of these will provide an opportunity to restate some of the major conclusions.

HYPOTHESIS NO. 1: English teachers will be well prepared in English, will be active in professional associations, and will make use of opportunities for continuing their education through inservice training, sabbatical leave programs, or extension school services.

This hypothesis has been conclusively supported. The teachers in the Study schools are better prepared than teachers nationally, are far more active professionally, and have more opportunities for inservice education, including stipends for study and sabbatical leaves. (See discussion in Chapter 3.)

HYPOTHESIS NO. 2: Literature programs will not be confined to a single anthology, but there will be such evidence of wide reading of many kinds of good books as library withdrawals, ample classroom libraries, and guided individual reading programs. Books will be not only prevalent but also accessible.

The Study found that the young people in these schools are clearly interested in reading for both study and personal satisfaction. Whether English programs stimulate such interest or whether it results from the overall academic interest of students and communities is far less certain. At any rate, one characteristic of English programs from which outstanding English students graduate appears to be both the extent and quality of the reading of students (Chapters 5 and 10). A second characteristic is a strong emphasis on literature in classroom study, an emphasis which, far from being an unfortunate imbalance, may not only stimulate much of the reading but also contribute to an expansion of interest, ideas, and sensitivity to language (Chapter 2). Although some evidence indicates a decline in reliance on the literary anthology as the sole basis for classroom instruction in literature, the anthology continues to find adherents. Classroom libraries are available in some of the stronger programs, but by no means are they characteristic of the typical classroom visited by project observers (Chapter 5). And while findings indicated a close relationship between the size and quality of the school library and use of its facilities, students preferred the public libraries with their larger and more accessible holdings (Chapter 10). If an interest in literature and in books is characteristic of the schools in the Study, many programs still were unable to provide an adequate supply of worthwhile books for their students.

HYPOTHESIS NO. 3: There will be a perceptible and good "intellectual climate" in all aspects of the school. More emphasis will be placed on ideas and processes of thought than on rote learning.

An assessment of "intellectual climate" proved difficult for project observers, with direct evidence almost impossible to obtain. Yet the quality of the building principal and his interest in academic values was rated as their dominant impression of these schools, followed by the tradition of learning in the school and the nature of the students and the community (Chapter 2). The climate of work in departments of English was also impressive, and the students themselves seemed more concerned with academic success than did other groups with which they were compared (Chapter 2). Although the evidence is tenuous, it tends to support the hypothesis.

HYPOTHESIS NO. 4: Teachers will provide not only for frequent writing experience, but for meaningful motivation, for careful correction of writing and thinking, and for supervised revision of papers.

Frequent and varied composition experiences, rather than experiences restricted to analytical or expository writing, are characteristic of most schools in the Study and are supported by the teachers. Although much attention is given to student motivation, the majority of teachers in these schools devote less careful attention to paper correction than project observers had hoped and rarely use their corrections to teach thinking and writing. The assessment of programs for teaching composition suggests that far more time needs to be spent on *instruction* in rhetoric and the processes of writing, somewhat less time on merely providing writing experiences (Chapter 6).

HYPOTHESIS NO. 5: Schools will reveal variety in methods and materials of instruction for different groups of students. Teachers will have considerable latitude in choosing materials of instruction. There will be evidence of experimentation and innovation in the kinds of instruction.

The hypothesis can be supported only partially by evidence accumulated in the Study. A variety of materials is used in the classrooms, especially in classes for college preparatory students, but the methods or classroom approaches used by teachers were somewhat less varied than observers anticipated. Especially in use of discussion techniques and audiovisual aids to instruction, many teachers in the Study appear unduly restricted. In teaching slow students, less use is made of various approaches to instruction than most staff members thought desirable (Chapters 2 and 4). Although two thirds of the teachers appear to have reasonable freedom to choose classroom materials, evidence of self-censorship resulting from real or imagined community pressures was reported in many areas (Chapter 10). Comparatively little experimentation or innovation in kinds of instruction was discovered in the schools originally selected. However, a special study of nineteen schools engaged in such innovative change in English revealed that most experimental schools tend not to attract teachers with strong subject matter backgrounds, nor are their English programs themselves likely to attract attention for success in achieving subject matter goals (Chapter 12).

HYPOTHESIS NO. 6: Language, literature, and composition will be taught in appropriate proportion and not as separate entities. Instruction will be coordinated and sequential.

The discovery that more than half of all classroom teaching emphasizes literature was one of the major surprises of the Study. Whether 52 percent of class time for literature, 15.7 percent for composition, and 13.5 for language may be considered "appropriate proportions" depends on one's perception of the nature of instruction in English. After careful study, the staff concluded that the proportions discovered may well be appropriate if teaching is of high quality, if instruction in literature is related both to language and to composition, and if the program is carefully integrated (Chapter 2). Evidence was not forthcoming, however, to suggest that many carefully integrated or even sequential programs are characteristic of most of the schools in the Study. A substantial number of carefully planned, well-coordinated programs in literature and composition were reported, however, especially among offerings for the college bound. Virtually no sequential or well-planned programs in language were discovered, and observer reports indicated widespread confusion among teachers concerning both content and method in language instruction (Chapter 7).

HYPOTHESIS NO. 7: Schools will provide comprehensive instruction in the skills of reading for all pupils and, in addition, special instruction for pupils whose needs and ability warrant more individualized procedures.

This hypothesis was disproved. Not only are sound programs in reading *not* characteristic of schools in the Study, but the programs observed seemed lacking in purpose, organization, and impact (Chapter 8). Most attempts to individualize instruction were concerned with programs for the academic student; the nonacademic, noncollege, or slow learner seldom received sufficient attention (Chapter 4). It may well be that schools with good reputations in English devote so much attention to their programs for able students that they neglect offerings for others, but surely the widespread neglect reported by observers should be a matter of serious professional concern.

HYPOTHESIS NO. 8: There will be in general a favorable climate for teaching as evidenced by appropriate salaries, good pupil-teacher ratios, efficient and pleasant facilities and school plant, and comparative freedom from burdensome clerical or policing obligations. Teachers will reflect positive attitudes toward teaching at all levels, and administrators will respect the professional integrity of their teachers. Though teachers will vary in their methods and approaches to teaching, there will be interaction and a considerable degree of unanimity in their efforts to deal with common problems.

A generally favorable climate was reported in most schools and ranked high in observers' analyses of English departments. Slightly lower pupil-teacher ratios were reported than in most schools, and few teachers expressed concern about salaries (Chapter 3). In interviews, however, many complained about lack of administrative support and the excessive burden of student paper corrections. Still, when asked to compare teaching conditions with those in other schools they had known, most teachers admitted the desirability of their present circumstances (Chapter 2). In those schools considered superior by project observers, interaction within the English faculty was encouraged, often through the use of common preparation periods or a departmental center where teachers could regularly meet (Chapter 4).

HYPOTHESIS NO. 9: There will be a reasonable and professional approach to the supervision of teachers. Subject-oriented supervisors will work constructively with beginning teachers and *help to coordinate the entire program. Supervisors will be given considerable scope and responsibility in the hiring of new teachers and in writing the English program. Appropriate time for such supervision will be given to the department heads. English teachers will be organized and led by a capable and resourceful chairman.*

The significance of the department chairman was underscored again and again throughout the Study. District supervisors and even building principals, insofar as classroom supervision is concerned, have little direct impact on teaching practice. Where a chairman has time and responsibility to supervise classroom teaching, a strengthening of the entire program is manifest. By no means are all chairmen in the Study schools given adequate time, nor do they all possess the characteristics needed for strong departmental leadership; but, where such conditions exist and a competent chairman is appointed, the benefits to the schools are many. The strength of the chairman was ranked third by project observers in the characteristics of Study schools; inadequacy of departmental leadership was considered first among weaknesses noted (Chapters 2 and 4).

HYPOTHESIS NO. 10: Within the English department there will be some unique, dedicated teachers who enthusiastically motivate student achievement.

Without question, the Study schools are characterized by the presence of outstanding teachers of English. Quality of the English staff was noted immediately by observers, and this quality is reflected in teacher preparation as well as teaching effectiveness (Chapter 3). But teachers were not of a uniformly excellent quality; what the staff discovered was that a small number of creative teachers on any English faculty may do much to motivate both students and fellow teachers, serving as catalysts to spark more effective and exciting teaching throughout the department than might otherwise obtain. The impact of a small number of outstanding teachers seemed more important than any other single factor in transforming mediocre departments into resourceful and dedicated faculties.

HYPOTHESIS NO. 11: Schools which have strong English programs for the college bound students will also make special accommodations for the interests and abilities of terminal students. They will therefore have fewer dropouts.

Similar in concern to Hypothesis No. 7, this hypothesis also must be rejected. Indeed, the evidence clearly indicates a lack of planned programs for the terminal student. Although some schools did report comparatively low dropout figures, observers found precious little support for the notion that the programs in English were meeting these students' interests or needs (Chapters 2 and 4). Clearly more must be done in this area, and many principals and chairmen seemed aware of the problem even if they lacked the ideas and resources for an immediate solution.

HYPOTHESIS NO. 12: The philosophy and substance of the English program will reflect the changing social and educational patterns of our times. The impact of technological innovations as they affect our society will be apparent in the content and the method of teaching English. The English curriculum will be subject to constant reevaluation in the light of our changing society.

Leaders in these departments appear far more aware of scholarly developments in English, especially in literature and composition, than of changes in the culture which may affect the teaching of English. The lack of attention to modern media of communication, the limited use of audiovisual materials, and the slight degree of program experimentation in the original 116 schools of the Study seem to directly contradict the hypothesis. In their concern with developing strong programs in English, teachers may sometimes neglect to consider the subject in relation to the uses of language in contemporary culture (Chapters 2 and 4).

This brief discussion of the twelve hypotheses can be considered only a partial summary of results of the Study. Other data, observations, and inferences emerge in the discussion of particular topics. Complex and varied as they sometimes are, the findings suggest the characteristics of the better English programs, and they also indicate that even the best of these programs are far less effective than they might be. Although the 158 schools are by no means typical of all American high schools, the problems they face in teaching English are not dissimilar to problems encountered everywhere. In describing some of the successes of these selected schools, as well as some of their failures, the investigators believe they have identified practices which can be carefully considered by any school faculty interested in improving instruction in English.

CHAPTER 14

Recommendations for Better English Teaching

The National Study of High School English Programs is more a series of case studies of selected English programs than a controlled research project. Questionnaires, interviews, and check lists were designed to reveal the main characteristics of English programs rather than to measure qualitative differences. Nevertheless, the individual and collective judgments of experienced professionals (most of them professors of English and education) who visited cooperating schools were a discrete and effective adjunct to the Study. From a consensus of their reports, certain recommendations emerge which may prove helpful to other schools. The judgments are from professionals who have been informed about the nature and conditions of high school English teaching through direct observation of over 1,600 classes in 158 schools in 45 states.

General Observations

An overview of the problems and practices of the outstanding English programs revealed above all the great variability which exists from school to school. Such variability alone should encourage departments which, for a variety of reasons, may find that emulating all recommended practices is an impossible task. Yet there are a few preconditions to an effective program, as well as certain general inadequacies, which emerged in almost all of the schools.

Effective leadership is essential. The quality of both the school principal and the department chairman directly affects the English program, for it is they who are or should be ultimately responsible for teaching conditions, climate of work, coordination and sequence in the curriculum, and the selection and continuing education of the rest of the faculty. Their responsibilities also include fostering within the school and the community a realistic tradition of learning adjusted to the needs and expectations of the students, a tradition which will motivate the efforts of students and teachers while generating public support for the program as a whole.

The quality of the teachers of English also distinguishes the best programs. Again and again observers attributed the success of a particular school to the teachers themselves, to their professional competence, dedication, and enthusiasm. These schools have not been able to attract whole departments of "super-teachers"; rather, in each there is a small cadre of master teachers whose concerted efforts serve as a catalyst for the program as a whole. To keep such truly outstanding teachers within the school, some system of merit pay seems essential; to ensure that they have a maximum effect on the program, a continuing professional dialogue must be consciously promoted.

Reasonable working conditions and adequate resources for teaching should be the first goals in any school seeking to improve its English program. Not only does a lack of resources hinder classroom teaching, but such problems seem to preoccupy teachers to the point where they do not concentrate on matters of content and curriculum until these external limitations have been removed. In the best programs observers found a commendable variety and abundance of materials used in the classroom, including class sets of books, classroom book collections, and audiovisual materials, as well as large and accessible library facilities.

Programs for terminal, noncollege pupils demand immediate attention and strength in virtually every school. Few departments seemed to recognize the special needs and interests of these students, and only a small number considered variety in materials or methods which teachers may use in classes with them. Instruction for these already poorly motivated pupils often seemed duller and more mechanical than that for any other group. Departments cannot continue to regard the advanced and honors sections as the prerogative of the most experienced and effective teachers if there is to be any improvement in the program for the lower tracks: the tradition of "working up" from 7C to 12A must end.

Few teachers show themselves capable of effectively leading class discussion. They claim to devote over 70 percent of class time to discussion and Socratic questioning; classroom observation, however, revealed that barely one fifth of the time is used in this way. What many teachers call "discussion" is little more than recitation and rote response, and even that degenerates into unprepared lectures when the students do not answer at all. Intensive inservice training, including demonstration teaching and formal presentations during department meetings, and more effective initial preparation are imperative.

Even in the better programs observers reported a disturbing lack of sequence and structure in the English curriculum. The need exists for greater coordination among all the elements of the language arts, for recognizing the obvious and important relationships among language, literature, composition, speech, and reading. With the fragmentation that now obtains in almost all programs, the observation that 52 percent of class time is devoted to literature, only 16 percent to composition, 14 percent to language, and but small fractions to speech, reading, and studies of mass media indicates an obvious disproportion. If instruction in these areas were carefully related in the classroom, there would be far less need for any adjustment in *what* is being taught.

The Teacher of English

The interview and questionnaire responses of the 1,331 teachers of English suggest that teaching load in the schools of the National Study does not differ significantly from that found in the average school across the nation. Yet certain distinguishing characteristics again emerge which suggest a series of implications for the high school.

When continuing education is actually promoted by the schools, the academic preparation of the average teacher of English does indeed improve. In Study schools it was this inservice education even more than initial preparation which distinguished teachers from the average teacher nationally. Many incentives are provided for continuing education, including salary increments, sabbatical leave, locally organized extension courses, and stipends to cover the expenses of additional education. Community support is again evident in these programs, which report that 20 percent of the teachers have received locally sponsored grants for further study.

Inservice education should also be promoted by activities within the department. Although it is seldom used effectively, the department meeting, if carefully structured and prepared, is a significant device for inservice education as well as for curriculum development and coordination. Demonstration teaching and the use of outside consultants have similarly proved to be very effective ways to introduce teachers to new approaches or to help them with specific problems which the more general scope of the usual methods course can deal with only peripherally. When schools do promote such activities, the benefits are obvious in the enthusiasm and interest of the teachers, as well as in the greater competence and familiarity with subject matter which is exhibited in the classroom. The school administrator must assume the responsibility for ensuring that the continuing education of the faculty provides a balance in backgrounds and training within the department. Teachers are indeed interested in furthering their education, but their preferences tend rather overwhelmingly toward literature courses; their teaching reveals a great need, however, for intensive training in both composition and language. Only if the schools take the initiative through incentives or requirements for a broader selection of courses can the department expect to have available the technical knowledge which is desirable in all areas of English.

To ensure that faculties are up to date in their knowledge of curriculum and methods, schools need to make available particularly valuable books and journals, as well as to encourage more active participation in professional activities. Although reporting widespread membership in organizations concerned with the teaching of English, few teachers participated in regional or national meetings or wrote even occasionally for the journals which they regularly read. This reluctance of even these unusually well-prepared teachers to share their experiences and opinions is alarming; it can only affect adversely the state of the profession as a whole.

If teaching conditions are to improve, schools must seek ways to reduce the burden of responsibilities which is now placed on the teacher of English. Problems of workload seem to result because too much is expected of the teacher: although his average work week is not unreasonably long, he simply does not have enough time to meet effectively all the demands, both professional and routine, that are made on him. The inevitable result has been an ill-defined sense of frustration felt by a teacher in even the best program when he evaluates his success in correcting papers, providing individual guidance, and preparing effective and coordinated lessons. If more of his tasks could be assigned to clerks and semiprofessional aides, the teacher could meet the demands of preparation, paper correction, and professional growth far more successfully and would certainly be far happier with the job he would be able to do than he is at present.

The English Department and the English Curriculum

Department chairmen, especially in large schools, should be given responsibility in four major areas: the appointment, supervision, and evaluation of teachers; the development of curriculum; the stimulation of support for the English program in the school as well as among the general public; and the administration of the many procedural details that affect teaching. If chairmen are to be effective, they must be given substantial time, money, and authority to carry out their duties. The schools of the National Study have departments which are more fully organized than is the department in the average school nationally, and the chairmen are better compensated for their efforts. That they are successful is indicated by the overwhelming praise which observers had for the chairmen in the best programs in the Study and the condemnations which they had for chairmen in the weak ones. Many chairmen in larger schools have found they are able to operate more efficiently by delegating some authority to *ad hoc* committees of teachers or to subchairmen who are also given compensating released time and salary increments. The important concern is that teachers have someone to whom they can turn with questions about methods and content in the English program, as well as someone to relieve them as much as possible from procedural details and problems of public relations.

The direct involvement of the department chairman in the appointment, supervision, and evaluation of teachers is especially important to a smoothly functioning program. Only the chairman has the intimate knowledge of the needs and the personalities of a given department necessary to pick additional teachers who will complement the existing program and will teach well within it. Regular and systematic classroom observation followed by careful discussion of the problems and successes of the lessons has proved to be one of the most useful methods of supervising and assisting teachers, although it is probably the most expensive in terms of time involved. Such simple expedients as review of lesson plans and coordination of final examinations are also valuable, yet they are almost universally ignored.

A viable curriculum within a given school develops through a continuing professional dialogue rather than through the imposition of a course of study developed by committees or specialists outside the school. The value of special curriculum projects seems to be the interest and the enthusiasm that are generated by the projects themselves; materials developed by the chairman or by a few of the teachers without the active involvement of the rest of the department are coldly received, and those from groups outside the school are often actively resented. Although a number of states have developed extensive curriculum guides, most schools rightly continue to regard the details of a program as their own special prerogative.

Curriculum committees need to remember that the interests, needs, and abilities of students at different levels vary considerably. Very few courses of study show well-developed programs for more than one level, and that one level is almost without exception that of the advanced college bound student. Observers indicated that this lack of definition between groups is reflected in the treatment the students receive in the classroom; apathy and neglect almost universally characterize the curriculum for the average or below-average class.

Literature

The average school in the National Study devoted 52 percent of class time to the teaching of literature. The best programs had certain factors in common: a plentiful supply of books, anthologies supplemented by class sets of other works, and classroom book collections. Such collections, although found in only a minority of the schools, seemed to observers to be one of the most effective ways of guiding individual reading, as well as of relating it to class work in literature.

Successful and exciting teaching of literature is most likely to take place when works are approached through close reading and modern critical methods, although good classes were observed with all of the many approaches currently in use in the high school. Historical and biographical approaches, while in many ways the easiest for the teacher with limited preparation time, lead more often than other methods to an evasion of literary study. A departmental consensus about the goals for the study of literature is valuable, but more for the conviction of the importance of literature which it engenders than for any resulting standardization of methods or content.

If teachers of English are to adopt close reading of literature in their classrooms, reduced teaching loads and careful inservice training may be necessary prerequisites. There is no doubt that critical analysis of a text requires more careful preparation and more restudying than any other approach, and teachers are reluctant to add this extra burden to their already overwhelming responsibilities. Many who have been trained in college in modern methods of textual analysis seem unable to derive from this training viable practices for the high school, a failure that can be remedied only through careful, continuing education and more explicit concentration on teaching methods.

New elective offerings at the senior level seem the most promising of attempts to modify the organization of literary study. Humanities and world literature courses are being introduced in a considerable number of schools, as are highly specialized offerings in such areas as drama, Shakespeare, and modern poetry. The shifting of traditional sequences to new grade levels without real changes in content or approach seems merely change for the sake of change and serves no useful function within the general development and improvement of curriculum.

An effective balance between student preferences and teacher prescription in the choice of literature to be studied remains an unrealized ideal in almost all programs. Students not only find contemporary literature, usually untaught, to be of the most significance to them, but also do not consider much that is presently required to be of much relevance. Indeed, while rating the literature program as the most valuable part of the English curriculum, these students also considered it one of the aspects most in need of improvement and modification. A majority of schools tended deliberately to deemphasize major—albeit at times controversial—twentieth-century American fiction in order to avoid embarrassing problems of public relations and threatened censorship. Inasmuch as many students try to read these often difficult works on their own without the guidance needed for real appreciation, such neglect seems inexcusable.

Literature programs for the terminal students need immediate and major change in both the approaches and the selections used. Adaptations which destroy the unity and artistic achievement of great works of literature, as well as graded readings of no literary merit whatsoever, are too often common fare; the only modifications which teachers make for such readers in their methods of teaching is to require even larger amounts of recitation and rote learning from these students as they try to cover the standard literary canon before graduation. The result too frequently is an understandable distaste for literature coupled with an inability to analyze any work well. Indeed, although observers found close reading being used successfully with terminal classes in a few schools, in the majority of classes discussion is related only vaguely to the "ideas" of a given work, and these ideas are most often the interpretations which the teacher presents rather than any understanding arrived at by the students themselves.

Composition

Before achieving much improvement in composition programs, teachers must come to recognize the difference between teaching composition in the classroom and providing students with opportunities to write. Although almost 16 percent of class time is devoted to composition, there is very little direct instruction in the writing process. Many teachers rely almost exclusively on error-oriented teaching based on mistakes in compositions which have already been written and corrected. And, although the teachers support the instructional chain of assignment, writing, correction, and revision, only 13 percent of the papers examined by observers showed signs of any thorough rewriting.

If stated priorities of organization of ideas, critical thinking, and clear communication are to be fostered through composition instruction and grading, teaching load must be reduced. Again only 17 percent of the papers which were reviewed gave evidence that teachers taught toward these goals. One effective way to ensure that papers will be read for more than errors in mechanics is through the use of lay readers, not to provide more frequent assignments, but to provide more direct help to student writers. It appeared to observers that the frequent but trivial composition topic which calls forth no real effort by the student may do no good at all; he merely repeats what he has done in the past, and unfortunately that may be all that is asked of him. By relieving the teacher of some of his paper load, a lay reader program should lead to better structured assignments as well as more direct instruction in the process of writing.

Composition programs tend to be redundant and fragmentary, a natural result of the lack of focus on the process and sequence of writing. One satisfactory solution to such problems has been a sequential guide to composition which provides a shifting emphasis on kinds of writing as well as such supplementary materials as literary models and discussion questions for use at different grade levels. Cumulative folders, whether kept for a year or for several years, are at best a weak solution to problems of sequence and redundancy, although they can provide a valuable perspective on the development of the individual student.

Perhaps the most successful practice in the teaching of composition has been the regular conference to discuss the problems and progress of the individual student. Such meetings are worth instituting even if they must be handled at the expense of other activities during regularly scheduled class meetings; they work best, however, when effected through changes in the scheduling of the traditional school day.

Contrary to the assertions of many critics of high school English programs, some two thirds of all composition assignments are based on literary topics. Indeed, more loosely structured experiences in creative writing, though apparently neglected in these schools, are among one of the most frequent requests of students who desire changes in the English program. Nonetheless, in the opinion of observers, a major need does not exist for any radical shift in the *kinds* of writing assignments made; it is not the kinds of experiences but the quality that needs attention.

The composition-language texts and workbooks which are required in almost every school appear to be of little practical value and are almost universally neglected. The majority of the texts concentrate on points of grammar and usage, with little differentiation in content presented from year to year, and neglect any sustained attention to the problems involved in constructing units larger than the sentence. When it is recognized that less than a third of the teachers use these texts with any regularity, one must question the considerable public expense which they entail.

Research in methods of teaching composition is obviously needed, as is a clear agreement among teachers about which of the concepts relating to rhetoric and composition should be taught at what levels. Yet the confusion which now obtains provides no rationalization for fragmented and redundant composition programs. Schools cannot wait in expectation of the seminal study on the teaching of writing; today teachers must combine knowledge, experience, and intuition to develop meaningful approaches in the high school. To take the position (as some individual teachers have) that writing "cannot be taught" or that it has no sequence and no content strikes a strangely inconsistent note in the general pattern of the educational philosophy of our time.

Language

Recent developments in scholarly discussions of language and grammar have led to confusion and a virtual end of language teaching in the high school today. Involving only 13.5 percent of class time, language is the least well taught of all the elements of the English curriculum, concentrating in the majority of schools on mechanical drill and error-based instruction in both grammar and usage.

If programs are to be effective and coordinated, teachers need to introduce into the classroom the study of language as a subject matter valuable in its own right. While interested in advanced study of new grammars, few teachers have any real knowledge of them, substituting the functional approach only because they have been made aware of the deficiencies of traditional school grammar. Most agree that the development in the student of a coherent conception of the structure of English would be valuable, but very few are able to achieve this; effective communication is usually subordinated to grammatical accuracy in any classroom presentation.

A need also exists for a thorough revision in the teaching of usage. Again while recognizing that there are varying standards which are acceptable or even requisite in different situations, most teachers concentrate on perfecting a single formal standard of written English. A functional approach again predominates, with most instruction concentrating on errors which students have committed; drill is almost always written, in spite of the value which oral drill and pattern practice have been shown to have.

Increasing attention to new patterns of language instruction in some schools is encouraging. Of these, the study of dialect has proved most successful and works well with slow groups. Other programs are giving attention, with varying degrees of success, to lexicography, semantics, rhetoric, argumentation, and phonology. Unlike regular programs which concentrate on structure and usage in relation to practice in writing, the new programs clearly view language as possessing a content involving theoretical considerations about the nature and structure of language, its history, and its variations. Perhaps because teachers are not yet sufficiently informed about the varied aspects of language study, new programs seem at times inadequate and even confused. But it is folly to compare the teaching of newly identified content and approaches introduced by newly educated teachers with programs backed by the tradition and experience of decades—the important fact is that a reconsideration of language instruction has at least begun.

Existing language texts have proved most successful when their scope and purpose is strictly limited. Although the traditional texts are usually ignored, some books are clearly necessary to provide teachers with materials for such aspects of language study as the history of English, dialectology, and levels of usage; it is rather much to expect the individual teacher to amass the necessary examples entirely on his own. When books are purchased to provide such materials, they are in fact used, but teachers must agree on the objectives of language study before they can expect many such works to be readily available through commercial sources.

Clearly, departments of English need to develop a more viable curriculum in language and to educate their teachers in new theoretical and practical approaches. The most successful programs visited by observers—and successful language programs were all too few—were those which had provided intensive inservice training for the entire English faculty. Teachers not only need to become familiar with new developments in the study of grammar and usage, but also need help in the more practical problems of relating such studies to the other areas of the language arts. Few teachers recognize the natural bridge which the language of literature can provide to linguistic studies; fewer still effect a successful and continuing integration.

Reading and Speech

The reading program on the high school level is inadequate, uncoordinated, and almost nonexistent. Although half of the schools have a reading specialist on their staffs, usually as part of the English department, observers could find little evidence of the effect of such specialists. Most teachers either regard reading as quite unrelated to the work which they do in the classroom or are sure they "teach it all the time" without needing to provide any special programs or careful sequence. Few schools distinguish between the special problems of the slow reader and the needs of the average or advanced student; even fewer have made effective use of the often considerable quantity of special reading materials and mechanical aids which have been purchased in initial bursts of enthusiasm.

If these conditions are to improve, there is an immediate need to distinguish in the classroom between teaching literature and teaching the particular skills necessary to read literature; too often these fundamentals are left to chance or to the elementary school. The conscious recognition that texts used in literary study can and often should be explicitly considered as examples of critical problems in reading, and that the skills and methods used to approach these texts are representative of those needed to approach a large number of similar texts, could lead to a considerable improvement in almost every program observed.

Speech and oral language skills are similarly neglected in the meager 4.9 percent of class time they receive, although teachers agree that they should stress these even at the expense of other activities. One re-emerging pattern is the semester of required speech, usually introduced at the tenth grade level, but in the long run proficiency in oral language cannot be developed through only one semester of work. It requires the continuing attention of the teacher of English at all levels of the high school program and a conscious emphasis on oral activities during other phases of English instruction. If such emphasis is to be effected, however, the teacher needs to study the relationship of oral to written language, the use of oral language in the teaching of usage, the opportunities which class discussion provides for stressing clear and effective oral communication, and the advantages and even the necessity of some oral interpretation of literature. Only when the average teacher as well as the speech specialist has training in such areas do good programs in oral language and speech seem likely.

Evaluation of Learning

The end-of-the-term examination developed at the departmental level administered to all students in a given program is one obvious device for measuring the success of the English curriculum as well as that of the individual teacher. The questions asked and the content tested should develop out of careful discussions among the staff concerning the objectives and approaches at each grade level, discussions which should involve the department chairman if all of the advantages of coordination and supervision inherent in this approach are to be realized.

No examination, of course, can expect to cover all of a year's work; the best that can be achieved is a sampling of some of the major areas. The most successful examinations force the student to use and apply knowledge and skills which he has developed rather than asking for rote responses that really require attendance at a particular lecture during the course of the year. Among the several question formats regularly used by teachers of English, the fill-in type seems in general the least successful, allowing as it does in most cases only for rote response. Some very ingenious multiple choice questions were found in the materials submitted to the project office for examination, questions which included plausible incorrect answers which provide the teacher with some knowledge of the relative level of learning that a student has achieved. In evaluating the student, a given question should of course also make clear to the teacher which aspects of his teaching have or have not been successful; in succeeding years approaches can then be modified accordingly.

Essay questions, favored by chairmen but still in the minority on examinations submitted for review, are most successful when they provide explicit instructions along with most of the materials necessary to answer the question; the students' ideas and critical abilities should be all that is lacking. It was appalling to discover, however, many questions requiring an encyclopedic knowledge of literary or cultural history, a requirement that could only lead to an unhealthy dependence on secondary sources as well as to cliché-ridden writing. As with other areas of the English program, the best questions were those used with honors or advanced placement classes. Here the tests seemed to reflect the teacher's general conception of the program as a whole: the honors student is expected to analyze specific literary works without needing a vast background of chronological or biographical facts; the general student is asked to regurgitate a compilation of facts and theory which are related more to the lectures his teacher has presented than to any first-hand acquaintance with works of literature.

School Libraries

Libraries even in the schools of the National Study fall far short of the standards recommended by the American Library Association. Expenditures are too low, collections too small, seating inadequate, staffs overworked; yet these libraries are better than the average school library nationally and were ranked by observers in about the middle of a value scale ranging from poor to excellent.

Although the majority of books are placed on open shelves, the accessibility of library collections to students facing ever increasing academic loads emerges as a major problem in most schools. One solution is the scheduling of study halls in the library, a practice which increases circulation by almost 20 percent; but most librarians are opposed to this approach because of the limitations it places on independent users. Other libraries have experimented with longer hours, often opening well before the rest of the school and remaining open during noon hours and after school; the design of most school buildings makes such special hours awkward, however, suggesting that any real improvements will necessitate major changes in physical plant as well as in scheduling. If such changes seem too radical, administrators might do well to consider that, in spite of the initial advantages of the school library, a significant number of students list convenience and accessibility as prime reasons for using the *public* facilities.

Like literature programs in general, libraries have not been responsive in their selections to the tastes and interests of the students whom they hope to serve. Although the students report obtaining an amazing average of almost eight books a month, they prefer to go to the public library for their selections. Approval of the school library rises in direct proportion to the size and extent of the collection, but even the largest libraries in the schools of the National Study were considered adequate for personal reading selections by less than 30 percent of the students. When asked to give reasons for their preference for the public library, the majority of students point to larger collections which include the major twentieth-century fiction which they prefer but which most school libraries, like most literature programs, avoid.

The problems of book selection are paralleled by discrepancies between the magazine preferences expressed by adolescents and the subscriptions reported by the schools. While subscribing almost without exception to a number of magazines of acknowledged value for the mature reader, few libraries acquire magazines written especially with the adolescent audience in mind; and these special magazines are read by a significant proportion of the students. Schools which are trying to stimulate the interest of the general and the terminal student should recognize that only through appealing to the interests he already has can they hope to attract him into the library where those interests can perhaps eventually be broadened and refined.

High Schools in Metropolitan Centers

The size and complexity of the school in the metropolitan center seem only to compound the problems common to all English programs. Although the schools chosen for study were anything but the "slum schools" in the cities visited, statistics suggest that less than half of the students who enter grade seven will eventually graduate. Teaching loads are high, too, with median assignments of 145 students in five classes plus additional, often nonacademic, assignments for teachers. For these reasons, the city school often is no longer the goal of the experienced teacher but rather has become the testing ground for the new.

When the necessary additional staff are hired and sufficient teaching materials are made available, split or double sessions appear to form a sensible alternative to the overcrowded classrooms which predominate in so many schools. Certainly the practice of making teachers float from room to room as space is available ignores the basic needs of the subject and puts undue stress on the teacher who continually finds himself without the proper materials when class discussion takes an unexpected but fruitful turn. Specialized classrooms with extensive teaching aids and learning materials selected for their relevance to the needs of English classes at particular levels, along with a well-equipped department center, are among the most promising of the many attempts to make teaching in outdated facilities more bearable and indeed are approaches which might well be considered with advantage by any school, whether overcrowded or not.

The most successful English programs in city systems are those which have a strong department chairman, one whose chief obligations are to internal problems of supervision and coordination rather than to the external administrative network. Such chairmen, given adequate time, authority, and money, are able to do much to overcome the special disadvantages of the large school system, promoting unity within the department and sequence within the curriculum through the professional discussion which they stimulate and the influence which they wield.

The spirit of organization and centralization which pervades most large school districts appears nonetheless to hinder the development of a viable English program. Teacher recruitment through a central personnel office without the involvement of the department chairman precludes the harmony and integration of departments found in more autonomous schools, and it often leads to curtailment or substantial modification of existing programs as teachers with certain special talents move on and are replaced by individuals with different backgrounds and skills. Most schools seem to suffer too from tight book-selection policies established on the district level to avoid censorship controversies or unfavorable public reactions. This administrative blanket effectively smothers teacher initiative, even when there are procedures for amending the book lists provided; few teachers in large districts even bother to think any more about what works they would like to teach if they were given the freedom to choose. The combination of such factors creates a feeling of helplessness and resentment unique to teachers from metropolitan areas and leads to much greater dissatisfaction with teaching conditions than was found in any of the other schools in the Study.

Experimental English Programs

Effective teaching of English demands teachers who know their subject and know their students. When an intellectual interest in the study of literature, composition, language, and the supporting skills is paramount in a program, innovation can spur a faculty to ever better teaching. Too often, however, change is encouraged and directed by well-meaning administrators with limited knowledge of the subject rather than by teachers or supervisors of English. Many experimental schools seem to prefer the young and inexperienced teacher who may be more amenable to administrators' suggestions, avoiding the more experienced teacher who, if perhaps more resistant to change, is also less likely to lose a sense of perspective. That such staffing trends are harmful is indicated by observer reports rating the quality of staff as one of the common weaknesses of experimental programs, although it had been a prime strength of the other schools in the Study.

Experimental English programs must be careful to sacrifice neither continuity and integrity of subject matter nor student-teacher relationships. Intricate attempts to restructure classes, change content, or respond to student interests too often neglect any overview of the problems and sequence of English instruction. What works well one year may lead only to confusion the next, and many teachers and students are confused when they discover that an initially interesting unit has led nowhere or that a complex schedule has resulted only in the fragmentation of the different elements of English instruction. Other schools find their programs breaking down when the rescheduling of a multitude of offerings results in students whose special needs and interests remain unknown to any teacher; indeed in some extreme cases the teachers did not even have a chance to learn all of their students' names before resectioning would begin.

The importance of careful planning and of continuing education for teachers involved in experimental programs cannot be overestimated. Summer workshops, leadership teams, regular conferences, and consultant help can all provide important support for teachers attempting to initiate a program whose demands and possibilities are as yet unknown. Certainly the innovative practices observed during the National Study do not provide any solutions to problems of teacher load; without exception they seem to take more preparation and planning time than any of the more conventional approaches. Nonetheless, there is an important excitement and interest among the teachers involved, an interest which, if it cannot reduce the teaching load, may in some ways make it more bearable.

Several innovations seem of special merit, among them the provision of special English study halls, organized reading rooms, or English laboratories; the individualization of instruction through seminar classes; and the introduction of humanities courses. The specialized facilities for English are the one successful alternative which some schools have found to problems of limited library facilities and inaccessible collections. Indeed, as long as administrators are reluctant to schedule classes in the library for study halls, these new facilities seem preferable to intriguing but less frequently used equipment within the library itself. Individualized instruction has been effected in a number of ways, but it is almost always accompanied by some form of large group meeting or study period under the direction of several teachers. Although such approaches very often lacked coordination, and although the lecture seemed to observers a rather ineffective method for instruction in English, the benefits of intensive work in small groups seemed to outweigh all the disadvantages of the accompanying activities. Humanities courses have already been initiated in 20 percent of the schools in the Study and in their best forms provided some of the most exciting instruction in literature which was observed. There is an inherent danger that such programs will attempt to cover too much too quickly, ignoring the individual text for the more general view of an author or an epoch, but these faults can be and often are avoided. Unfortunately, however, although the humanities program has much to offer the general or the terminal student, very few schools have introduced such offerings for any but their advanced classes.

Although confusion and uncertainty as well as errors in judgment characterize the majority of experimental programs visited, to compare them in all respects with programs developed over several decades would be patently unfair. Hidden within many of the programs is the germ of an idea which, when perfected, may have much to contribute to more conservative curriculums. Schools need to remember that this is the function of all innovation, that in the long run change will be an evolutionary rather than a revolutionary process. The best teaching of the future will surely represent a union of the best of the English teaching tradition and its concern for student and subject with the best of the experimental approaches.

APPENDIX A

Schools Cooperating in the Study

ALABAMA

Ensley High School
2301 Avenue J
Birmingham 8
Robert L. Pennington, Principal
Kathryn Green, Chairman

Gadsden High School
Gadsden
F. T. Dobbs, Principal
Mrs. Katherine Shamblin, Chairman

Sidney Lanier High School
1756 S. Court Street
Montgomery 36104
Willis E. Glazner, Principal
Laura Johnston, Chairman

Shades Valley High School
104 Hermosa Drive
Birmingham
F. A. Peake, Principal
Dinnie May Mackey, Chairman

ARKANSAS

Camden High School
Camden
Wyley J. Elliott, Principal
Mrs. Olga E. Boles, Chairman

Magnolia High School
Magnolia
Jack Clemens, Principal
Mrs. Henry Gladney, Chairman

Pine Bluff High School
10th and Laurel Streets
Pine Bluff
Austin Glenn, Principal
Mrs. Thelma Collie, Chairman
(formerly Josephine Martin)

ARIZONA

Rincon High School
422 N. Arcadia Boulevard
Tucson
Hanley R. Slagle, Principal
Mrs. Jean Christison, Chairman

CALIFORNIA

Carpinteria High School
Carpinteria
Robert C. Wooldridge, Principal
Marjorie Holmes, Chairman

Cubberley Senior High School
4000 Middlefield Road
Palo Alto
Scott D. Thomson, Principal
Bernard Tanner, Chairman

El Camino High School
4300 El Camino Avenue
Sacramento 21
A. D. Abbott, Principal
Mrs. Iris Nordberg, Chairman

Fremont High School
P. O. Box 215
Sunnyvale
Ralph F. Kling, Principal
Donald Sherlock, Chairman

George Washington High School
600–32nd Avenue
San Francisco 21
Ruth N. Adams, Principal
Mrs. Melanie C. Ainsworth, Chairman

Hollywood High School
1521 N. Highland Avenue
Hollywood 90028
Dr. Charles E. Sutcliffe, Principal
Mrs. Jane M. Cushman, Chairman

CALIFORNIA (continued)

Mira-Costa High School
701 S. Peck Avenue
Manhattan Beach
Lloyd W. Waller, Principal
Mrs. Arabelle Stubbe, Chairman

Redlands High School
Redlands
Robert G. Campbell, Principal
Mrs. Catherine C. Dunn, Chairman

San Leandro High School
2200 Bancroft
San Leandro
John C. Roberts, Principal
Mrs. Janet Cotter, Chairman

COLORADO

Alameda High School
Lakewood
J. Vernon Heaston, Principal
Mrs. DeFazio, Chairman

Arvada West High School
11325 Allendale Drive
Arvada
Arthur Ohanian, Principal
Harry Parrat, Chairman

Bear Creek High School
3490 S. Kipling
Morrison
William A. Mitchell, Principal
Mrs. Marguerite Townsend, Chairman

East High School
1545 Detroit Street
Denver 6
Robert P. Colwell, Principal
John H. Zumwinkel, Chairman

Lakewood High School
Lakewood
J. Vernon Heaston, Principal
Charles McLain, Chairman

Wasson High School
2115 Afton Way
Colorado Springs 80909
W. H. Preston, Principal
Frances E. Wallingford, Chairman

CONNECTICUT

Andrew Warde High School
Melville Avenue
Fairfield
Kenneth Petersen, Principal
Evelyn M. Copeland, Supervisor

DELAWARE

Mount Pleasant High School
Washington Street Exit & Marsh Road
Wilmington 19809
Charles H. Bomboy, Principal
Mrs. Margaret P. Wingo, Chairman

FLORIDA

Melbourne High School
1050 Babcock Street
Melbourne
B. Frank Brown, Principal
Barbara Bixby, Chairman

Miami Edison Senior High School
Miami
William Duncan, Principal
Mrs. Frances Grizzle, Chairman

Nova High School
3600 S.W. 70th Avenue
Fort Lauderdale
Arthur B. Wolfe, Director
Richard C. Whiting, Language Arts Coordinator

Robert E. Lee Senior High School
Jacksonville
Warren Kirkham, Principal
Mrs. Kathleen Vinson, Chairman

Stranahan High School
1800 Southwest Fifth Place
Fort Lauderdale 33304
Kenneth Haun, Principal
Mrs. Mildred S. Miller, Chairman

HAWAII

Punahou Academy
Honolulu 96822
Walter L. Curtin, Principal
Marjorie Dunstan, Chairman

IDAHO

Idaho Falls Senior High School
601 S. Holmes Avenue
Idaho Falls
Glenn M. Manion, Principal
Mrs. Marilla Gimmett, Chairman

Pocatello High School
325 N. Arthur
Pocatello
C. H. Teuscher, Principal
Helene McAlister, Chairman

ILLINOIS

Bowen High School
2710 E. 89th Street
Chicago
Dr. Lorraine Sullivan, Principal
Mrs. Muriel Miller, Chairman

Danville High School
Fairchild at Jackson
Danville
E. D. Milhon, Principal
John C. Sanders, Chairman

Eisenhower High School
1200 16th Street
Decatur
Murvil Barnes, Principal
Norman L. Stewart, Chairman

Evanston Township High School
1600 Dodge Avenue
Evanston
Dr. L. S. Michael, Principal
Clarence W. Hach, Chairman

Highland Park High School
433 Vine Street
Highland Park
C. S. Stunkel, Principal
William W. Guthrie, Chairman

Lakeview High School
1001 Brush College Road
Decatur
William W. Fromm, Principal
Virginia Casey, Chairman

The Mother McAuley Liberal Arts
High School
3737 W. 99th Street
Chicago 42
Sr. Mary Inviolata, RSM, Principal
Sr. Mary Brian, RSM, Chairman

New Trier Township High School
Winnetka
Dr. William H. Cornog, Principal
R. Stanley Peterson, Chairman

Ridgewood High School
7500 W. Montrose
Norridge
Eugene Howard, Principal
Beecham Robinson, Chairman

St. Ignatius High School
1076 W. Roosevelt Road
Chicago
Fr. Donald O. Nastold, SJ, Principal
Richard Bollman, Chairman

INDIANA

Arsenal Technical High School
1500 E. Michigan Street
Indianapolis 46205
Howard L. Longshore, Principal
Irene Rhodes, Chairman

Broad Ripple High School
1115 Broad Ripple Avenue
Indianapolis 46220
J. Fred Murphy, Principal
Mrs. Ruth B. Herin, Chairman

Culver Military Academy
Culver
Ernest B. Benson, Dean
A. G. Hughes, Chairman

INDIANA (continued)

James Whitcomb Riley High School
405 E. Ewing Avenue
South Bend
Howard Crouse, Principal
Edith L. Steele, Chairman

John Adams High School
808 S. Twyckenham Drive
South Bend
Russell Rothermel, Principal
Richard Shurr, Chairman

Lew Wallace High School
415 W. 45th Avenue
Gary
D. T. Torreson, Principal
Evelyn A. Parnell, Chairman

Penn-Knox High School
Pennville
Roscoe Sharp, Principal
Tom Paxton and Jim Mallers, Cochairmen

Shortridge High School
3401 N. Meridan Street
Indianapolis 46207
Robert J. Shultz, Principal
Mildred Foster, Chairman

Thomas Carr Howe High School
500 Julian Avenue
Indianapolis
Thomas Stirling, Principal
Steward S. Craig, Chairman

South Side High School
3500 Calhoun
Fort Wayne
J. E. Weicker, Principal
Ronald L. Gersmehl, Chairman

IOWA

Burlington High School
University Place
Leroy Pease, Principal
Mrs. Anna Mae Lowther, Chairman

Central High School
1212 Nebraska Street
Sioux City 51105
Harold Stevens, Principal
Ruth Tarvin, Chairman

Ottumwa High School
College and Second Streets
Ottumwa
Lewis E. Dye, Principal
J. J. Anderson, Chairman

KANSAS

Pittsburg Senior High School
1310 N. Broadway
Pittsburg
John L. England, Principal
Charles Yoos, Director of Secondary Education

LOUISIANA

Benjamin Franklin Senior High School
719 S. Carrollton Avenue
New Orleans 18
Estelle Barkemeyer, Principal
Harry C. Phelps, Jr., Chairman

Bolton High School
Alexandria
W. E. Pate, Principal
Mrs. Inez Parker, Chairman

MAINE

Deering High School
Stevens Avenue
Portland
Carleton L. Wiggin, Principal
Frances Hueston, Chairman

MARYLAND

Baltimore Polytechnic Institute
North Avenue and Calvert Street
Baltimore 21202
Claude Burkert, Principal
Harold P. Resh, Chairman

MARYLAND (continued)

Bel Air Senior High School
Heighe Avenue
Baltimore
William B. Jones, Principal
Mrs. Frances T. Long, Chairman

Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School
Bethesda 14
James B. Williams, Principal
Margaret M. Casey, Chairman

Catonsville Senior High School
Bloomsbury Avenue & Rolling Road
Baltimore 21228
Harvey Kreusburg, Jr., Principal
Howard B. Goodrich, Chairman

Montgomery Blair High School
Wayne Avenue and Dale Drive
Silver Spring 20907
Richard E. Wagner, Principal
Richard T. Pioli, Chairman

Walter Johnson High School
10311 Old Georgetown Road
Rockville
Earl P. Schubert, Principal
Margaret Kauffman, Chairman

MASSACHUSETTS

Brookline High School
115 Greenough Street
Brookline 46
B. H. Holland, Principal
Trask H. Wilkinson, Chairman

Malden High School
77 Salem Street
Malden
F. Champlin Webster, Principal
Walter C. Ryan, Chairman

Newton High School
Walnut Street
Newtonville
Richard W. Mechem, Principal
Mary Irene Lanigan, Chairman

Phillips Academy
Andover
John M. Kemper, Principal
William H. Brown, Chairman

Pittsfield High School
East Street
Pittsfield
Harold E. Hennessy, Principal
Rosemary T. Haylon, Chairman

St. Mary's Girls' High School
55 Tremont Street
Lynn
Sr. Joseph Catherine, SND, Principal
Sr. Marie Rose Julie, SND, Chairman

MICHIGAN

Ann Arbor High School
601 W. Stadium Boulevard
Ann Arbor 11
Nicholas Schreiber, Principal
Lucille Lundgren, Chairman

Bloomfield Hills High School
Bloomfield Hills
Richard J. Spiess, Principal
Cramer Percival, Chairman

Dearborn High School
19501 W. Outer Drive
Dearborn
Robert W. Young, Principal
Mary Joan Woods, Chairman

Denby High School
12800 Kelly Road
Detroit
Irvin Wolf, Principal
Anne Marie Laird, Chairman

Southfield High School
24675 Lahser Road
Southfield
R. E. Hall, Principal
James Shippee, Chairman

MICHIGAN (continued)

Thomas M. Cooley High School
15055 Hubbell
Detroit 48227
Ben S. Chinitz, Principal
Charles H. Hohner, Chairman

MINNESOTA

North High School
Fremont and 17th Avenue N.
Minneapolis 11
Chester M. Johnson, Principal
Seymour Yesner, Chairman

Roosevelt High School
4029–28th Avenue S.
Minneapolis
John C. Wells, Principal
Edna D. Sanders, Chairman

University High School
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis 55455
Robert Anderson, Principal
Rodger L. Kemp, Chairman

MISSISSIPPI

Greenville High School
Greenville
J. T. Hall, Principal
Mrs. Nell H. Thomas, Chairman

Meridian High School
Meridian
Charles A. Armstrong, Principal
Mrs. Winifred Farrar, Chairman

MISSOURI

Central High School
3616 N. Garrison Avenue
St. Louis
A. C. Phillips, Principal
William Katz, Chairman

Clayton High School
1 Mark Twain Circle
Clayton 5
Nathaniel Ober, Principal
Clara White, Chairman

McCluer High School
1896 S. Florissant Road
Florissant
Dr. Merlin Ludwig, Principal
Thomas G. Moore, Chairman

McKinley High School
2156 Russell Boulevard
St. Louis 63104
Dr. Mildred Hiller, Principal
Mr. Perrine, Chairman

Normandy Senior High School
6701 Easton
St. Louis
C. E. Potter, Principal
Helen Shipman, Chairman

St. Louis Country Day School
425 N. Warson Road
St. Louis 63124
David M. Pynchon, Principal
Daniel Durgin, Chairman

MONTANA

Billings Senior High School
425 Grand Avenue
Billings
C. E. Borberg, Principal
Charles Nesbit, Chairman

NEBRASKA

Central High School
124 N. 20th Street
Omaha 68102
J. Arthur Nelson, Principal
Josephine Frisbie, Chairman

Hastings High School
1100 W. 14th
Hastings
Thomas Keating, Principal
Darrel Lloyd, Chairman

Holy Name High School
2909 Fontenelle Boulevard
Omaha 68104
Rev. Mother M. Eleanor, OSM, Principal
Sr. Mary Adolorata, OSM, Chairman

NEVADA

Pahranaget Valley High School
Alamo
David Anderson, Principal
Robert Hansen, Chairman

Reno High School
Booth Street and Foster Drive
Reno
David W. Finch, Principal
Mrs. Mabel Brown, Chairman

Virgin Valley High School
Mesquite
Blaine W. Allen, Principal
Lynn P. Dunn, Chairman

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Central High School
Beech Street
Manchester
Harold B. Snyder, Principal
William T. Dennehy, Chairman

Nashua High School
Elm Street
Nashua
Patrick J. Morley, Principal
Anne M. McWeeney, Chairman

The Phillips Exeter Academy
Exeter
Richard W. Day, Principal
Richard F. Neibling, Chairman

St. Paul's School
Concord
Rev. Matthew M. Warren, Rector
Herbert Church, Jr., Chairman

NEW JERSEY

Miss Fine's School
Princeton
Shirley Davie, Headmistress
Mrs. Anne B. Shepherd, Chairman

Tenafly High School
Tenafly
E. H. Van Vliet, Principal
Mrs. Elizabeth Bream, Chairman

NEW MEXICO

Sandia High School
7801 Candelaria Road N.E.
Albuquerque
Leroy Brannon, Principal
Mrs. Nora B. Nunnally, Chairman

NEW YORK

Amherst Central High School
4301 Main Street
Snyder 26
John Scheller, Principal
Richard McLaughlin, Chairman

Bayside High School
32 Avenue and 208th Street
Bayside, Queens 11361
Mrs. Gertrude Waldeyer, Principal
Nathan Mazer, Chairman

Canisius High School
1180 Delaware Avenue
Buffalo
Rev. L. D. Mounteer, SJ, Principal
Rev. Albert T. Bartlet, SJ, Chairman

Christopher Columbus High School
925 Astor Avenue
The Bronx 10469
Edward R. Kolevzon, Principal
Phillip Eisman, Chairman

Fordham Preparatory School
East Fordham Road & Third Avenue
Bronx
Rev. Eugene J. O'Brien, SJ, Principal
Jerome Martin, Chairman

Manhasset High School
Manhasset, Long Island 11030
Warren McGregor, Principal
Travis E. Harris, Chairman

Notre Dame High School
150 Corlaer Avenue
Schenectady 12304
Mother St. Vivienne, SCND, Principal
Mother St. Hannah, CND, Chairman

NEW YORK (continued)

Sleepy Hollow High School
210 N. Broadway Street
North Tarrytown
Dr. Henry M. Richardson, Principal
George Gilmore, Chairman

NORTH CAROLINA

Claremont Central High School
Third Avenue N.E.
Hickory
W. D. Cottrell, Principal
Mrs. Genella Allison, Chairman

Fike Senior High School
Wilson
W. Willard Woodard, Principal
Doris Thorne, Chairman

OHIO

DeVilbiss High School
3301 Upton Avenue
Toledo
Irvin Conrad, Principal
Ruth Smith, Chairman

Fairmont High School
3301 Shroyer Road
Kettering 45429
Alfred Bolender, Principal
Mrs. Ruth J. Evans, Chairman

John Marshall High School
3952 W. 140th Street
Cleveland
Lee B. Bauer, Principal
John Lincks, Chairman

John R. Buchtel High School
1040 Copley Road
Akron 44320
Oscar L. Schneyer, Principal
Margaret L. Oechsner, Chairman

Shaker Heights High School
Shaker Heights, Cleveland 44120
Russell H. Rupp, Principal
George G. Starr, Chairman

Talawanda High School
Oxford 45056
Alton Rudolph, Principal
Mrs. Berniece Shrader, Chairman

Upper Arlington High School
1650 Ridgeview Road
Columbus 43221
Joseph A. Dorff, Principal
Charles G. Will, Chairman

OKLAHOMA

Capitol Hill High School
500 S.W. 36th
Oklahoma City
Clarence B. Breithaupt, Principal
Marguerite Danford, Chairman

Central High School
212 E. Sixth Street
Tulsa
Carl L. McCafferty, Principal
Mrs. Louise B. Davidson, Chairman

OREGON

Jefferson High School
5210 N. Kerby Avenue
Portland
Roy O. Malo, Principal
William See, Chairman

PENNSYLVANIA

Abington Senior High School
Abington 19001
Dr. W. Eugene Stull, Principal
Edward R. Seltzer, Chairman

Eastern High School
R. D. #1
Wrightsville
Carl M. Payne, Principal
Harvey E. Smith, Chairman

Germantown Friends School
31 W. Coulter Street
Philadelphia 19144
Henry Scattergood, Principal
Richard H. Tyre, Chairman

PENNSYLVANIA (continued)

Mount Lebanon High School
Cochron Road
Pittsburgh
Nelson Mills, Principal
Janice Mellinger, Chairman

Olney High School
Front Street & Duncannon Avenue
Philadelphia
Marcon L. Stewart, Principal
Mildred E. Osler, Chairman

Penn Hills High School
12200 Garland Drive
Pittsburgh 15235
Joseph Wherry, Principal
Mr. McLeister, Chairman

Schenley High School
Bigelow Boulevard & Center Avenue
Pittsburgh
F. Gardner Gillen, Principal
Harry O. Ellison, Chairman

Upper Merion High School
Crossfield Road
King of Prussia
R. R. Strine, Principal
Mrs. Marie Wolfskill, Chairman

SOUTH CAROLINA

Dreher High School
700 Adger Road
Columbia
Arlie W. Whittinghill, Principal
Patti Parker, Chairman

Greenville Senior High School
Greenville
Donald Linn, Principal
Myrtle Tanner, Chairman

SOUTH DAKOTA

Rapid City High School
809 South Street
Rapid City
Donald Varcoe, Principal
Mrs. Verna Deimer, Chairman

TENNESSEE

Central High School
306 S. Bellevue
Memphis
R. E. King, Principal
Mrs. Louise A. Rauscher, Chairman

Chattanooga High School
865 E. Third Street
Chattanooga
Creed F. Bates, Principal
Arminda Smallwood, Chairman

TEXAS

Austin High School
3500 Memphis Avenue
El Paso
Charles H. Harris, Principal
Mrs. Margaret O. Briggs, Chairman

Bellaire Senior High School
5100 Maple
Bellaire 101
Harlan Andrews, Principal
Mrs. Shirley W. Wiley, Chairman

Douglas MacArthur High School
2923 Bitters Road
San Antonio 78217
Ben H. Harris, Principal
Mrs. Betty Porter, Chairman

Robert E. Lee High School
P. O. Box 30
Baytown
Dr. Henry M. Armstrong, Principal
Jane Mitcham, Chairman

Thomas Jefferson High School
2200 Stadium Road
Port Arthur
Clyde Gott, Principal
Mrs. Isabella Bjerring, Chairman

Woodrow Wilson High School
100 S. Glascow Drive
Dallas
Paul Harris, Principal
M. Dell Webb, Chairman

UTAH

Bryce Valley High School
Tropic 84776
Kerry D. Nelson, Principal
Mrs. Marian Shakespear, Chairman

East High School
840 S. 13th East Street
Salt Lake City
Joseph W. Richards, Principal
Catherine A. Collins, Chairman

Olympus High School
4055 S. 23rd East
Salt Lake City
Harold W. Handley, Principal
Diane Hansen, Chairman

VERMONT

Springfield Senior High School
Springfield 05156
Armand A. Guarino, Principal
John W. Ragle, Director of the Humanities Project

VIRGINIA

Granby High School
7101 Granby Street
Norfolk 23505
Donald G. Griffin, Principal
Mary Knight, Chairman

Washington Lee High School
1300 N. Quincy
Arlington 22201
O. U. Johansen, Principal
Dorothy A. Nelson, Chairman

WASHINGTON

Bellevue High School
601–108th S.E.
Bellevue
H. H. Heidenreich, Principal
Ruth S. Gibson, Chairman

John R. Rogers High School
1622 Wellesley Avenue
Spokane 99207
Paul C. MacGown, Principal
Elizabeth Herbert, Chairman

Sammamish High School
100–140th Avenue S.E.
Bellevue 98004
Fred E. Knoell, Principal
Walter Hopkins, Chairman

Stadium High School
111 N. E Street
Tacoma
Albert Hayes, Principal
Richard Lewis, Chairman

WEST VIRGINIA

Stonewall Jackson High School
Washington & Park Street
Charleston
G. E. Steadman, Principal
Stuart P. Armstrong, Chairman

WISCONSIN

Appleton High School
Appleton
Herbert H. Helble, Principal
Mrs. Jack Burroughs, Chairman

East High School
Green Bay
D. R. McMasters, Principal
William E. Otto, Chairman

Oshkosh High School
375 N. Eagle Street
Oshkosh 54901
Carl Traeger, Principal
Gladys Veidemanis, Chairman

West High School
Green Bay
G. E. Dauplaise, Principal
Mrs. Isabelle Bacon, Chairman

WYOMING

Natrona County High School
Casper
William Reese, Principal
Frances F. Feris, Chairman

APPENDIX B

Staff and Observers

STAFF MEMBERS	James R. Squire, Director; Professor of English and Counselor in Teacher Education; Executive Secretary, NCTE
	Roger K. Applebee, Associate Director; now Lecturer in English and Associate Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
	Robert A. Lucas, Graduate Assistant
	Joseph Thomson, Graduate Assistant; now Assistant Professor of Educational Psychology, University of Victoria
	Arthur Applebee, Staff Assistant, NCTE
REGULAR OBSERVERS	William Curtin, Assistant Professor of English
	John Erickson, Assistant Professor of Education
	William H. Evans, Associate Professor of Education; now Professor of English and Education, Southern Illinois University
	Robert F. Hogan, Associate Executive Secretary, NCTE; now Executive Secretary, NCTE
	J. N. Hook, Professor of English and Counselor in Teacher Education, University of Illinois
	James M. McCrimmon, Professor of the Humanities; now Professor of English, Florida State University
	Stanton Millet, Associate Professor of English and Associate Dean, Graduate College; now Dean of Students, University of Illinois
	Frank Moake, Associate Professor of English
	Priscilla Tyler, Associate Professor of English; now Professor of English and Education, University of Missouri, Kansas City
	Jerry L. Walker, Associate Professor of Education
	Harris W. Wilson, Professor of English
SUPPLEMENTARY OBSERVERS	Robert J. Lacampagne, Director of Achievement Awards and Special Projects, NCTE
	James Lyon, Business Manager, NCTE

Roger E. Martin, Business Manager, NCTE; now Assistant to the Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Enid M. Olson, Director of Publication and Public Relations, NCTE

Robert W. Rogers, Professor of English, former Head, Department of English; now Dean, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Robert S. Whitman, Supervisor of Student Teachers in English; now Assistant Professor of English Education, University of Wisconsin

APPENDIX C

List of Instruments

Identification and Explanation

Instrument	Observers	Explanation
Principal's Interview Schedule	both	*Time:* administered upon arrival at school. *Procedure:* observers alternated asking questions and taking notes. *Purpose:* to obtain overall picture of schools, to get inkling of particular areas to pursue in observation or interview. *Total time:* one period.
Department Head Interview [Concept Check List]	both	*Time:* first day, usually after principal's interview. *Procedure:* alternated asking questions and recording. At end, administered Concept Check List (verbally). *Purpose:* to determine role of chairman, overall view of structure in English department, certain distinctive features to be investigated, certain outstanding teachers to be interviewed or observed; to confirm English department meeting after school and arrange for interviews with advanced (12th) and terminal (10th) groups. *Total time:* one period.
Librarian's Questionnaire [Book List]	one	*Time:* first day. *Procedure:* used as an interview schedule or questionnaire. Book List checked against card catalogue to determine library holdings. *Purpose:* to determine character of library. *Total time:* 25-30 minutes.
Counselor's Questionnaire	one	*Time:* first day. *Procedure:* left with counselor early in visit to be picked up at end of second day. *Purpose:* to find place of English in the total curriculum, define the student body. *Total time:* one half-period (if as interview).

Copies of all instruments appear in James R. Squire and Roger K. Applebee, *A Study of English Programs in Selected High Schools Which Consistently Educate Outstanding Students in English* (USOE Cooperative Research Report No. 1994, 1966).

Instrument	Observers	Explanation
Classroom Visitation Card	both	One completed for each class observed. *Purpose:* to record characteristics of the class, teaching materials, assignments, books carried by students, purpose and features of the lesson, pupil involvement, content. *Total time:* Usually one half-period per class.
High School Characteristics	—	Questionnaire distributed by mail to school principals in advance of visit. *Purpose:* to obtain basic data on schools.
Student Questionnaire A	—	Questionnaire distributed to former Achievement Award winners who had graduated from schools in the Study. *Purpose:* to obtain impressions of selected graduates of the preparation they had received.
Principal's Questionnaire and Department Head's Questionnaire	—	Questionnaires distributed by mail in advance of the Study. *Purpose:* to secure a general impression of the nature of the school and of the English program. Useful in alerting observers to special problems and unique features of the program.
Student Writing Check List	one	Completed by one of the observers after reviewing at least 40 to 50 student papers from a representative sample of classes. *Purpose:* to assess the kinds of assignments and the extent and purpose of corrections and revisions.
Questionnaire: Final Examinations	—	Check list questionnaire sent to department chairmen. *Purpose:* to obtain precise information concerning frequency and type of examinations used.
Summary of Classroom Visitation	both	Completed by each observer after visiting all classes in a given school. *Purpose:* to obtain a subjective evaluation of classroom instruction and emphases in the program. All evaluations recorded on a seven-point scale.
Summary of Reaction to a School	both	Completed by each observer at the end of a visit. *Purpose:* to provide an opportunity to record general impressions, and candid observations which cannot be indicated on check lists.
Student Interview (advanced group)	one or both	*Time:* when convenient, preferably first day. *Procedure:* given to twelfth grade advanced or honors group. Twenty minutes were allowed for

Instrument	Observers	Explanation
[Student Questionnaire] [Concept Check List]		completing a written questionnaire and for administering Concept Check List (verbally). *Purpose:* to test students' reactions to English course, check their alertness, compare what teachers think they are teaching to what students think they are learning. *Total time:* one period.
Student Interview (terminal group) [Student Questionnaire]	one	*Time:* either day. *Procedure:* interview administered by one of observers. Similar to interview with advanced group except that *no* Concept Check List is administered. *Purpose:* to find out what school is doing for terminal students in comparison to advanced students. *Total time:* one period.
Group Interview with all English Teachers [Issues Questionnaire]	both	*Time:* after school on first day of visit. *Procedure:* at beginning, Issues Questionnaire filled out as teachers arrive. *Purpose:* to determine the stand of the department as a whole, to observe the interaction between teachers and department head. *Total time:* one hour.
Selected Teacher Interview	one	*Time:* preferably second day. *Procedure:* administered to five to ten teachers singled out because of student comments, principal's or department head's citation, or because they distinguished themselves during English department interview. *Purpose:* to determine the unique quality of each teacher, what the teacher finds particularly effective in teaching, what his views of modern and past trends are. *Total time:* one half-period each.
[Teacher Questionnaire]		Questionnaires were placed in mail boxes or left with department head, depending on which process was more convenient. *Purpose:* to obtain quantitative data from all English teachers concerning their preparation, experience, teaching practices and preferences. *Total time:* one hour.

Instrument	Observers	Explanation
Reading Questionnaire	both	Six (6) packets of questionnaires administered to different tracks and grade levels by 3-6 teachers, collected by them and mailed to the project office. *Purpose:* to obtain data on pupils' personal reading.

APPENDIX D

Supplementary Tables

A. Tables on Required and Personal Reading of Students

I. Activities after School and in the Evening as Ranked by Advanced Twelfth Grade Students

II. Student Time Reported Spent Each Week on Reading

III. Kinds of Books Students Like to Read

IV. Reading Habits of Students according to How They Want to Be Remembered

V. Criteria Used for Selecting Books as Reported by Advanced Twelfth Grade Students

VI. Books Suggested by Advanced Twelfth Grade Students as Additions to the English Program

VII. Authors Most Often Mentioned as Significant by Advanced Twelfth Grade Students

VIII. Titles Required in College Preparatory Classes as Reported by Department Chairmen

IX. Magazine Preferences of Various Student Groups

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XII. Sources of Books Reported by Students

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XV. Undergraduate Majors Reported by Teachers

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XVII. Length of Time Since Completing College Courses

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XXI. Teacher Assessment of Selected Teaching Aids

XXII. Teaching Methods in Tenth Grade, Twelfth Grade, and Terminal Classes as Reported by Observers

XXIII. Methods Most Often Used in Classroom Teaching as Reported by Teachers

XXIV. Instructional Emphasis on Selected Concepts

A. Tables on Required and Personal Reading of Students

Table I

Activities after School and in the Evening as Ranked by Advanced Twelfth Grade Students

(n = 2,317)

(AS = After School; EVE = Evening; T = Total.)

			Number of Students Ranking				
Rank Order	*Activity*		1	2	3	4	5
1	Studying or Reading	AS	629	517	286	111	30
		EVE	1,636	284	90	32	4
		T	2,265	801	376	143	34
2	School Clubs	AS	455	478	245	90	40
		EVE	33	222	202	102	47
		T	488	700	447	192	87
3	Watching Television	AS	84	222	184	143	88
		EVE	91	512	315	192	85
		T	175	734	499	335	173
4	Employment at Home	AS	183	215	191	127	45
		EVE	72	197	182	106	66
		T	255	412	373	233	111
5	Clubs outside of School	AS	44	133	149	89	67
		EVE	48	310	271	112	72
		T	92	443	420	201	139
6	School Athletics	AS	323	142	89	54	35
		EVE	20	65	101	102	46
		T	343	207	190	156	81
7	Employment away from Home	AS	229	86	69	43	33
		EVE	127	98	70	49	42
		T	356	184	139	92	75

Table II

Student Time Reported Spent Each Week on Reading

*(n = 13,291)**

Reading for Classwork

Percent of Students Classified as:

Time Spent	*Boys*	*Girls*	*Grade 10*	*Grade 11*	*Grade 12*	*College*	*Undecided*	*Terminal*
Less than One Hour	7.7	3.4	6.5	4.8	5.1	3.6	11.0	12.5
1-2 Hours	19.0	13.6	18.4	15.7	14.0	14.3	20.8	23.2
3-5 Hours	43.3	42.6	46.0	41.9	41.3	42.7	44.2	43.0
6-10 Hours	22.7	29.7	22.2	27.4	29.4	28.9	19.2	17.3
More than 10 Hours	6.0	9.8	5.6	9.1	9.3	9.3	4.2	3.3
Reading Other than Classwork								
Less than One Hour	23.3	17.1	20.2	19.8	20.3	17.9	24.0	30.3
1-2 Hours	30.2	31.1	29.4	31.2	31.9	30.8	30.8	29.8
3-5 Hours	30.4	34.3	32.7	32.3	32.1	33.9	29.7	25.5
6-10 Hours	11.1	12.0	12.1	11.5	10.7	12.2	10.2	9.2
More than 10 Hours	4.5	5.0	5.1	4.5	4.4	4.8	4.4	4.6

*Percentage figures do not total 100% because a small number of students did not respond to each question.

Table III

Kinds of Books Students Like to Read

(n = 13,291)

	Percent of Students Classified as:							
Kind	*Boys*	*Girls*	*Grade 10*	*Grade 11*	*Grade 12*	*College*	*Undecided*	*Terminal*
Detective, Mystery	35.7	46.8	45.1	41.4	36.0	39.6	46.8	48.1
Adventure, War, Sea	65.1	30.0	45.0	46.9	47.3	48.6	43.8	35.5
Romance, Love	5.8	70.0	40.1	40.5	38.5	36.6	44.6	56.4
Humor	52.7	71.4	61.7	63.2	63.0	63.2	59.9	61.3
Science Fiction	45.4	24.4	36.9	34.2	31.2	34.7	35.7	28.6
Sports	43.7	8.5	28.4	23.5	22.3	25.3	27.6	19.9
Poetry	8.3	27.7	14.2	19.2	22.4	20.1	13.9	13.1
Biography	33.2	51.4	40.7	42.6	44.8	46.1	33.6	30.9
History	34.8	29.5	28.6	32.6	34.7	35.7	22.0	18.2
Current Events	26.2	23.2	19.4	23.2	32.1	28.0	16.1	10.0
Science	26.9	9.4	18.1	16.8	17.5	19.8	12.3	8.6
Any Other Kind	20.7	22.6	19.7	21.7	24.0	23.0	18.3	17.1

Table IV

Reading Habits of Students According to How They Want to Be Remembered

Reading Each Week for Homework	*Brilliant Student*		*Good Athlete*		*Leader in Activities*		*Popular among Students*	
	Number	*Percent*	*Number*	*Percent*	*Number*	*Percent*	*Number*	*Percent*
Less than 1 Hour	180	4.01	188	10.49	81	2.60	246	7.23
1-2 Hours	573	12.77	424	23.65	424	13.62	640	18.80
3-5 Hours	1,855	41.34	767	42.78	1,370	44.02	1,524	44.77
6-10 Hours	1,341	29.89	330	18.40	941	30.24	758	22.27
+ 10 Hours	481	10.72	67	3.74	266	8.55	203	5.96
Reading Each Week Other than Homework								
Less than 1 Hour	716	15.96	531	29.62	498	16.00	817	24.00
1-2 Hours	1,288	28.71	558	31.12	1,014	32.58	1,066	31.32
3-5 Hours	1,541	34.34	472	26.32	1,095	35.19	1,032	30.32
6-10 Hours	633	14.11	167	9.31	372	11.95	311	9.14
+ 10 Hours	283	6.31	52	2.90	120	3.86	157	4.61
*Kinds of Books Preferred**								
Detective and Mystery Stories	1,799	40.09	665	37.09	1,305	41.93	1,543	45.33
Adventure, War, Sea Stories	2,050	45.69	1,181	65.87	1,277	41.03	1,456	42.77
Romance, Love Stories	1,743	38.85	194	10.82	1,576	50.64	1,597	46.92
Humorous Stories	2,786	62.09	933	52.04	2,131	68.48	2,195	64.48
Science Fiction	1,668	37.17	701	39.10	923	29.66	1,101	32.34
Sports Stories	865	19.28	1,089	60.74	501	16.10	775	22.77
Poetry	1,062	23.67	106	5.91	697	22.40	495	14.54
Biography	2,090	46.58	547	30.51	1,564	50.26	1,289	37.87
Books on History	1,735	38.67	495	27.61	1,052	33.80	803	23.59
Books on Current National or World Problems	1,353	30.15	276	15.39	916	29.43	597	12.54
Science Books	1,121	24.98	288	16.06	441	14.17	394	11.57
Other	1,097	24.45	301	16.79	678	21.79	679	19.95

*Percentages total more than 100% because multiple responses were allowed.

Table V

Criteria Used for Selecting Books as Reported by Advanced Twelfth Grade Students

(n = 2,286 responses)

	Rank Order as Listed by Students					
Criterion	1	2	3	4	5	*Weighted Total**
Recommendation of Teacher	630	697	436	286	65	78.83
Recommendation of Fellow Students	430	554	585	266	111	67.64
Book Lists Provided by School or Teachers	526	426	371	306	143	62.02
Browsing in Library	366	290	338	443	226	51.16
Recommendation of Parents	97	148	210	287	278	25.59
Recommendation of Public Librarian	20	45	83	127	173	9.56
Recommendation of High School Librarian	23	45	73	121	167	9.23
Other	194	82	52	53	39	15.99

*Weighted Total is the sum of 1 × 5, 2 × 4, 3 × 3, 4 × 2, and 5 × 1 divided by 100.

Table VI

Books Suggested by Advanced Twelfth Grade Students as Additions to the English Program

(n = 2,317)

Rank Order	*Title*	*Number of Times Mentioned*
1	*Lord of the Flies,* William Golding	96
2	*The Catcher in the Rye,* J. D. Salinger	66
3	*To Kill a Mockingbird,* Harper Lee	34
4	*1984,* George Orwell	33
5	*The Bible*	30
7	*Crime and Punishment,* Fëdor Dostoyevsky	27
7	*Gone with the Wind,* Margaret Mitchell	27
7	*The Robe,* Lloyd C. Douglas	27
10	*Black Like Me,* John Griffin	25
10	*Cry, the Beloved Country,* Alan Paton	25
10	*Of Human Bondage,* Somerset Maugham	25
12	*The Scarlet Letter,* Nathaniel Hawthorne	24
14	*Exodus,* Leon Uris	23
14	*The Ugly American,* William Lederer and Eugene Burdick	23
14	*War and Peace,* Leo Tolstoi	23
16	*The Grapes of Wrath,* John Steinbeck	20
17	*The Return of the Native,* Thomas Hardy	19
18	*Brave New World,* Aldous Huxley	18
19.5	*All Quiet on the Western Front,* Erich Remarque	17
19.5	*Les Misérables,* Victor Hugo	17
21.5	*The Fountainhead,* Ayn Rand	16
21.5	*Moby Dick,* Herman Melville	16
23	*Animal Farm,* George Orwell	15
25	*The Good Earth,* Pearl S. Buck	14
25	*Hamlet,* William Shakespeare	14
25	*Huckleberry Finn,* Mark Twain	14
29.5	*Advise and Consent,* Allen Drury	11
29.5	*The Agony and the Ecstasy,* Irving Stone	11
29.5	*Hawaii,* James Michener	11
29.5	*The Once and Future King,* T. H. White	11
29.5	*The Prophet,* Kahlil Gibran	11
29.5	*A Tale of Two Cities,* Charles Dickens	11
33	*Profiles in Courage,* John F. Kennedy	10
35.5	*Fail-Safe,* William Lederer and Eugene Burdick	8
35.5	*The Great Gatsby,* F. Scott Fitzgerald	8
35.5	*Our Town,* Thornton Wilder	8
35.5	*Poetics,* Aristotle	8
39.5	*The Diary of a Young Girl,* Anne Frank	7
39.5	*Lord Jim,* Joseph Conrad	7
39.5	*The Stranger,* Albert Camus	7
39.5	*Travels with Charley,* John Steinbeck	7

Table VII

Authors Most Often Mentioned as Significant by Advanced Twelfth Grade Students

(n = 2,317 students)

Rank Order	*Author*	*Number Times Mentioned*	*Rank Order*	*Author*	*Number Times Mentioned*
1	Shakespeare, William	101	40.5	cummings, e. e.	3
2	Steinbeck, John	92	40.5	Eliot, T. S.	3
3	Hemingway, Ernest	50	40.5	Galsworthy, John	3
4	Dickens, Charles	20	40.5	Huxley, Aldous	3
5	Hardy, Thomas	18	40.5	Kafka, Franz	3
6.5	Faulkner, William	17	40.5	du Maurier, Daphne	3
6.5	Twain, Mark	17	40.5	Rand, Ayn	3
8	Lewis, Sinclair	15	40.5	Russell, Bertrand	3
9	Dostoyevsky, Fēdor	14	40.5	Sartre, Jean-Paul	3
10	Buck, Pearl S.	11	40.5	Wilder, Thornton	3
11	Conrad, Joseph	11	60	Alcott, Louisa May	2
12	Poe, Edgar Allan	11	60	Balzac, Honoré de	2
13	Emerson, Ralph Waldo	10	60	Blake, William	2
14	Frost, Robert	9	60	Carroll, Lewis	2
15	Salinger, J. D.	9	60	Catton, Bruce	2
16	Camus, Albert	8	60	Ferber, Edna	2
17	Costain, Thomas	8	60	Fitzgerald, F. Scott	2
18	Maugham, Somerset	8	60	Fleming, Ian	2
19	Shaw, George Bernard	8	60	Gide, André	2
20	Wolfe, Thomas	8	60	Goldman, Arthur	2
24.5	Baldwin, James	6	60	Keller, Helen	2
24.5	Dooley, Tom	6	60	Kipling, Rudyard	2
24.5	Douglas, Lloyd C.	6	60	Mill, John Stuart	2
24.5	Dreiser, Theodore	6	60	Milton, John	2
24.5	Hawthorne, Nathaniel	6	60	Packard, Vance	2
24.5	Joyce, James	6	60	Remarque, Erich Maria	2
24.5	London, Jack	6	60	Stevenson, Robert L.	2
24.5	O'Neill, Eugene	6	60	Stuart, Jesse	2
30	Austen, Jane	5	60	Thoreau, Henry	2
30	Roberts, Kenneth	5	60	Tennyson, Alfred Lord	2
30	Tolstoi, Leo	5	60	Warren, Robert Penn	2
33	Brontē, Emily	4	60	Wells, H. G.	2
33	Chaucer, Geoffrey	4	60	Whitman, Walt	2
33	Stone, Irving	4	60	Wilder, Thornton	2
40.5	Caldwell, Taylor	3	60	Wordsworth, William	2
40.5	Cronin, A. J.	3	60	Wouk, Herman	2

Table VIII

Titles Required in College Preparatory Classes as Reported by Department Chairmen

(n = 109)

			Number of Listings		
Rank	*Title*	*Total*	*Grade 10*	*Grade 11*	*Grade 12*
1	Macbeth	67	0	21	46
2	Julius Caesar	56	55	1	0
3	Hamlet	52	0	4	48
4	Silas Marner	50	48	2	0
5	The Scarlet Letter	47	6	39	2
6.5	A Tale of Two Cities	40	28	3	9
6.5	The Return of the Native	40	0	3	37
8	Huckleberry Finn	39	10	26	3
9	The Red Badge of Courage	37	11	26	0
10.5	Moby Dick	28	3	23	2
10.5	Our Town	28	1	24	3
12	The Bridge of San Luis Rey	26	8	17	1
13	Oedipus Rex	18	1	3	14
14	Idylls of the King	16	10	6	0
15	The Pearl	14	13	1	0
17	The House of Seven Gables	13	3	10	0
17	The Old Man and the Sea	13	6	7	0
17	Pride and Prejudice	13	0	2	11
19	Walden	11	1	10	0
20.5	Cyrano de Bergerac	10	5	1	4
20.5	Giants in the Earth	10	1	8	1

Table IX

Magazine Preferences of Various Student Groups

(n = 13,291)

	Percent of Students Classified as:				
Periodical	*Boys*	*Girls*	*Grade 10*	*Grade 11*	*Grade 12*
Life	48.1	47.4	47.6	47.8	48.2
Post	30.3	28.2	29.6	29.8	28.1
Look	25.8	28.2	26.7	27.8	26.6
Time	21.6	18.1	16.7	19.4	23.9
Seventeen	0.1	24.1	13.1	13.6	11.8
Reader's Digest	9.6	13.9	10.1	12.6	12.7
Newsweek	10.9	9.0	7.1	9.1	14.1
McCalls	0.5	12.6	7.2	7.2	6.2
Sports Illustrated	11.2	0.6	5.8	5.7	5.4
National Geographic	6.2	4.4	5.6	5.2	4.9
Ladies Home Journal	0.3	6.7	3.4	3.7	3.9
U.S. News & World Report	4.2	3.1	2.5	2.9	5.6
Hot Rod	5.3	0.04	2.3	3.0	2.3
Sports	4.6	0.14	2.6	2.3	1.7
Ingenue	0.03	4.2	2.3	2.4	1.8

Table X

Use of Selected Magazines in the Classroom as Reported by Teachers

(n = 1,331 teachers responding)

	Percent Responding			
Magazine	*Frequently*	*Occasionally*	*Never*	*No Response*
Harper's	4.5	25.8	63.4	6.3
Atlantic	6.8	32.7	54.5	6.0
Reader's Digest	12.2	32.5	49.1	6.2
Literary Cavalcade	11.5	21.9	60.0	6.6
Senior Scholastic	3.5	16.5	72.3	7.7
Read	2.9	5.5	82.6	7.0
Practical English	10.7	24.3	58.4	6.6
Newspaper	10.8	37.8	40.4	11.0
Other	7.8	9.8	26.4	56.0

Table XI

Student Use of School Library According to per Capita Holdings

Number of Times School Library Used by Students in Previous Month	*Percentage in Ten Schools with High per Capita Holdings*	*Percentage in Ten Schools with Low per Capita Holdings*
0	8.0	28.0
1-2	20.0	29.0
3-5	26.0	24.0
6-10	19.0	9.0
More than 10	26.0	7.0
No Response	1.0	3.0

Table XII

Sources of Books Reported by Students

	Rank Order of Number of Students Using Each Source (n = 16,089 students)		*Rank Order of Total Number of Books Borrowed from Each Source*		*Rank Order of Number of Books Borrowed per Student Using Each Source*	
Rank Order	*Source*	*Students*	*Source*	*Books*	*Source*	*Average Number of Books*
1	School Libraries	9,589	Public Libraries	43,124	Public Libraries	4.6
2	Paperback	9,501	School Libraries	26,420	School Libraries	2.8
3	Public Libraries	9,414	Paperback	24,634	Paperback	2.6
4	Home Libraries	7,769	Home Libraries	18,843	Book Clubs	2.5
5	Friends	6,952	Friends	11,590	Home Libraries	2.4
6	Book Clubs	1,248	Book Clubs	3,000	Friends	1.7
7	Other	835	Other	2,666		

Table XIII

Comparative Use of Public and School Libraries by Students during Preceding Month

(n = 15,875)

	Library	*Not at All*	*1-2 times*	*3-5 times*	*6-10 times*	*More than 10 times*	*No Response*
Percentages for Study	School	16.0	24.0	27.8	13.7	17.2	1.3
	Public	23.3	24.7	27.2	13.6	8.3	2.9
Percentages for Pratt Library Study*	School	19.5	36.7	25.6	14.0	4.2	–
	Public	9.2	31.4	38.8	15.6	5.0	–

*Lowell Martin, *op. cit.*, p. 20.

B. Tables Providing Data on Teachers and Classes

Table XIV

Number of Pupils Met Daily

Percentage Reporting

	Fewer than 100	*101-125 Pupils*	*126-150 Pupils*	*151-175 Pupils*	*176-200 Pupils*	*Over 200 Pupils*
Study *(n = 1,331)*	21.0	30.8	32.4	12.0	2.6	0.3
NCTE Survey* *(n = 7,417)*	19.4	24.2	30.5	17.0	6.2	2.5

*Committee on National Interest, *The National Interest and the Teaching of English* (Champaign, Ill., National Council of Teachers of English, 1961).

Table XV

Undergraduate Majors Reported by Teachers

Percentage of Teachers Reporting

Field of Major	*Study* *(n = 1,331)*	*NCTE Survey* *(n = 7,495)*
English	71.8	50.5
Language Arts Combination	5.0	3.1
Speech	8.0	3.7
Drama, Theatre	4.6	1.3
Journalism	3.2	0.9
Area Major including English	7.4	7.6
Education	14.9	9.0
Unrelated Area Major	3.2	3.6
Other Subjects	21.6	20.2

Table XVI

Undergraduate Minors Reported by Teachers

Percentage of Teachers

	Study *(n = 1,331)*	*NCTE Survey* *(n = 8,925)*
English	19.2	22.6
Language Arts Combination	3.5	5.1
Speech	8.9	6.5
Drama, Theatre	3.1	1.7
Journalism	2.9	1.2
Education	20.4	15.2
Other Subjects	76.0	47.7

Table XVII

Length of Time Since Completing College Courses*

Percentage of Teachers Responding

Time Since Completing a College English Course:	*Less than One Year*	*1 Year*	*2 Years*	*3-5 Years*	*6-10 Years*	*More than Ten Years*	*Never*
Study *(n = 1,331)*	23.4	9.0	11.3	14.7	11.7	15.0	14.9
NCTE Survey *(n = 7,495)*	24.0	8.8	11.8	14.1	10.9	13.4	17.0
Time Since Completing a College Education Course:							
Study *(n = 1,331)*	19.8	7.5	9.8	16.5	13.8	15.9	16.7
NCTE Survey *(n = 7,495)*	25.9	9.4	12.9	14.5	11.6	11.1	14.6

*Excluding Undergraduate Work

Table XVIII

National Professional Journals to Which Teachers Subscribe

Rank Order	*Journal*	*Percentage Study (n = 1,331)*	*Percentage NCTE Survey (n = 7,417)*
1	English Journal	83.5	44.8
2	College English	30.2	5.4
3	Elementary English	2.1	2.6
4	College Composition & Communication	9.8	1.7
5	Reading Teacher	5.0	1.5
6	Speech Teacher	5.6	1.1
7	American Speech	3.8	
	Other	28.8	

Table XIX

College Courses Reported of Interest and Value by Teachers

Percent of Teachers Responding

Type of Course	*Percent Indicating Great Interest*	*Percent Indicating Some Interest*	*Percent Indicating Little Interest*	*Percent Indicating No Interest*	*No Response*
Literature Surveys	24.4	40.2	21.5	9.7	4.2
Literature of Periods	46.4	39.1	8.2	2.5	3.8
Literary Genre	29.6	42.7	16.1	4.8	6.8
Literary Criticism	51.3	33.4	8.9	2.6	3.8
Literature for Adolescents	36.9	35.1	15.9	8.4	3.7
Close Study of Literature	47.7	35.7	9.9	6.3	0.4
Intermediate or Advanced Composition	50.7	31.3	9.8	4.6	3.6
Speech or Drama	24.9	39.8	23.0	7.7	5.3
History of the Language	29.3	37.9	19.8	7.7	5.3
Traditional Grammar	11.9	27.3	29.4	25.7	5.7
Structural or Generative Grammar	31.2	39.6	15.1	8.8	5.3
Teaching of Reading	35.8	33.4	16.2	9.6	5.0
Practical Methods of Teaching English	40.9	30.4	14.2	9.5	5.0
Advanced Studies in Curriculum	35.5	33.1	15.6	10.8	5.0

Table XX

Length of Time Since Engaging in Various Professional Activities

(n = 1,331 for Study Teachers and 7,417 for NCTE Survey)

		Percentage of Teachers Indicating							
Type of Professional Meeting		*Less than 1 Year*	*1 Year*	*2 Years*	*3-5 Years*	*5-10 Years*	*More than 10 Years*	*Never*	*No Response*
Attended Local English Meeting	Study	54.7	6.7	5.6	5.1	3.1	1.5	21.7	1.6
	NCTE	54.2	9.2	4.8	4.0	2.2	1.7	23.6	
Attended State English Meeting	Study	33.2	6.3	4.7	6.2	3.6	3.0	39.0	4.0
	NCTE	30.0	7.8	4.8	4.5	2.2	1.9	48.8	
Attended National English Meeting	Study	8.4	2.3	3.5	6.2	3.6	2.7	68.2	5.1
	NCTE	5.1	3.1	3.0	3.1	2.1	1.5	82.1	
Attended Voluntary English Workshop	Study	28.8	7.6	7.1	7.7	4.5	2.6	37.8	3.9
	NCTE	31.8	9.3	6.3	5.2	2.7	1.4	43.3	
Conferred with English Specialists	Study	58.1	6.8	5.9	5.6	2.0	1.4	16.5	3.7
	NCTE	56.1	10.2	5.6	4.2	2.0	1.1	20.8	

Table XXI

Teacher Assessment of Selected Teaching Aids

(n = 1,331 teachers)

	Percent of Teachers Rating					
Teaching Aid or Material	*Absolutely Essential*	*Very Important*	*Of Some Importance*	*Not Very Important*	*Detrimental*	*No Response*
a. Anthology	25.5	32.5	28.7	8.9	2.9	1.5
b. Class sets of books	30.7	43.4	19.1	5.5	0.4	0.9
c. Classroom library	10.4	31.0	38.2	19.0	0.2	1.2
d. Sets of 7-8 books for group study	5.3	29.2	43.6	19.2	0.5	2.2
e. Materials for slow readers	31.4	40.1	21.0	5.3	0.3	1.9
f. Books for mature readers	16.8	37.9	30.0	12.9	1.1	1.3
g. Workbooks w/drills	5.3	12.4	33.5	37.6	10.2	1.0
h. Language textbook	24.0	27.9	33.9	11.8	0.7	1.7
i. Handbook on language	25.8	37.8	29.0	6.0	0.1	1.3
j. Phonograph	14.4	34.3	39.8	10.2	0.2	1.1
k. Recordings	16.7	37.6	36.9	7.7	0.2	0.9
l. Filmstrip projector	10.1	22.9	44.2	20.9	0.7	1.2
m. Motion picture	14.5	28.9	40.2	14.9	0.5	1.0
n. Teaching machine	5.1	8.1	26.2	52.6	6.7	1.3
o. Tape recorder	6.7	19.9	47.9	23.1	0.5	1.9
p. Television	1.4	5.8	35.8	50.2	4.2	2.6
q. Radio	1.1	3.5	28.1	60.4	4.5	2.4
r. Table of periodicals	6.1	23.3	49.6	19.2	0.5	1.3
s. Class set of dictionaries	53.4	33.1	9.7	2.8	0.1	0.9
t. Movable furniture	34.9	30.1	21.3	10.4	2.1	0.8
u. Lay readers	8.6	19.8	30.3	26.0	10.1	1.2
v. Clerical service	21.1	36.7	28.0	10.0	0.8	3.4
w. Duplicating machine	66.0	24.5	6.0	2.1	0.1	1.3
x. Overhead projector	9.3	25.3	44.8	17.1	0.3	3.2
y. Opaque projector	7.5	23.3	46.1	19.6	0.8	2.7
z. Teaching manual	12.6	21.6	36.6	24.1	3.1	2.0

Table XXII

Teaching Methods in Tenth Grade, Twelfth Grade, and Terminal Classes as Reported by Observers

	Percentage Reported in:		
Method	*Grade 10 (n = 9,220 minutes)*	*Grade 12 (n = 9,602 minutes)*	*Terminal Classes (n = 3,618 minutes)*
Recitation	28.9	20.9	28.3
Lecture	18.8	21.9	20.9
Student Presentation	14.9	14.8	8.3
Discussion	14.8	21.2	9.2
Silent Work	9.1	8.2	19.6
Audiovisual	2.9	1.1	1.2
Socratic Questioning	1.9	2.8	3.2
Group Work	1.7	2.6	1.5
Other	6.9	6.4	7.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0

Table XXIII

Methods Most Often Used in Classroom Teaching As Reported by Teachers

(n = 1,331)

Rank	*Method*	*Percentage*
1	Discussion	53.6
2	Socratic	17.6
3	Lecture	14.2
4	Recitation	7.0
5	Student Presentation	2.2
6	Silent Work	1.3
7	Small Group	0.8
8	Team Teaching	1.1
	Other	0.4
	Audiovisual Aids	0.1
	No response	1.7
		100.0

Table XXIV

Instructional Emphasis on Selected Concepts

	Advanced 12th Grade Students (n = 96 classes)				
	Percentage reporting concept initially stressed at grade level indicated				
Concept	*Prior to 10*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*Not Intro-duced*
Connotation	32.3	28.1	24.0	5.2	10.4
Alliteration	42.0	35.3	17.5	1.0	4.2
Slanting	21.7	17.4	14.1	3.3	43.5
Metaphor	77.8	15.8	4.2	1.1	1.1
Blank Verse	55.3	25.5	17.0	1.1	1.1
Argumentation	14.9	19.2	23.5	7.3	35.1
Inference	16.0	18.1	29.8	4.2	31.9
Allusion	18.9	37.9	32.7	3.2	7.3
Parallel Structure	35.9	34.8	17.4	5.4	6.5
Colloquial	79.4	14.1	5.4	1.1	0.0
Epic	57.6	27.2	8.7	5.4	1.1
Cliché	71.0	20.4	5.4	0.0	3.2
Jargon	42.1	17.9	17.9	6.3	15.8
Satire	63.6	25.0	7.3	3.1	1.0
Analogy	17.4	39.1	34.8	7.6	1.1
Determiners	3.2	1.0	2.2	2.2	91.4
Paradox	20.6	44.3	27.9	4.1	3.1
Redundance	44.1	22.4	17.3	5.3	10.9
Nominative Absolutes	26.1	16.3	10.9	3.2	43.5
Dramatic Irony	5.2	31.9	31.9	20.6	10.4
Précis	11.3	15.7	23.6	11.2	38.2
Sentence Patterns	54.3	17.0	6.4	3.2	19.1
Allegory	21.9	38.6	28.1	8.3	3.1
Consistency of Diction	12.4	15.7	23.6	10.1	38.2
Levels of Abstraction	2.2	4.5	13.5	10.1	69.7
Narrative Point of View	32.3	31.3	19.8	10.4	6.2
Periodic Sentence	3.3	1.1	5.4	12.0	78.2
Conditional Clause	50.5	25.8	12.9	0.0	10.8
Tone	14.6	36.0	25.8	18.0	5.6
Euphemism	7.6	6.4	28.0	21.5	36.5

Table XXIV (continued)

	English Department Chairmen (n = 91) *Percentage reporting concept initially stressed at grade level indicated*				
Concept	*Prior to 10*	*10*	*11*	*12*	*Not Introduced*
Connotation	27.7	42.2	20.0	7.8	2.3
Alliteration	52.3	35.2	9.1	2.3	1.1
Slanting	13.1	20.2	29.8	16.6	20.3
Metaphor	48.9	42.2	6.7	1.1	1.1
Blank Verse	16.9	61.7	16.9	4.5	0.0
Argumentation	8.9	30.0	30.0	16.7	14.4
Inference	14.6	24.7	37.1	15.7	7.9
Allusion	19.6	37.9	27.6	10.3	4.6
Parallel Structure	16.7	38.1	34.5	10.7	0.0
Colloquial	41.6	43.8	7.9	4.5	2.2
Epic	33.0	25.0	19.3	20.4	2.3
Cliché	22.9	31.3	31.3	9.7	4.8
Jargon	10.5	34.9	26.7	16.3	11.6
Satire	12.3	39.8	26.2	21.7	0.0
Analogy	6.2	29.6	46.9	16.1	1.2
Determiners	12.2	11.0	12.2	9.7	54.9
Paradox	4.6	24.1	35.6	33.3	2.4
Redundance	24.7	34.6	25.9	9.9	4.9
Nominative Absolutes	10.6	23.3	27.8	9.4	28.9
Dramatic Irony	4.7	30.6	30.6	29.4	4.7
Précis	17.2	29.4	35.8	8.8	8.8
Sentence Patterns	32.3	28.4	10.4	3.5	25.4
Allegory	14.9	33.3	23.0	26.5	2.3
Consistency of Diction	18.5	32.1	18.5	17.3	13.6
Levels of Abstraction	4.9	10.9	23.2	35.4	25.6
Narrative Point of View	30.7	42.0	17.1	5.7	4.5
Periodic Sentence	15.8	29.3	15.8	24.5	14.6
Conditional Clause	31.3	42.5	13.7	1.3	11.2
Tone	14.8	33.3	28.6	18.7	4.6
Euphemism	2.5	13.9	40.5	38.0	5.1

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